

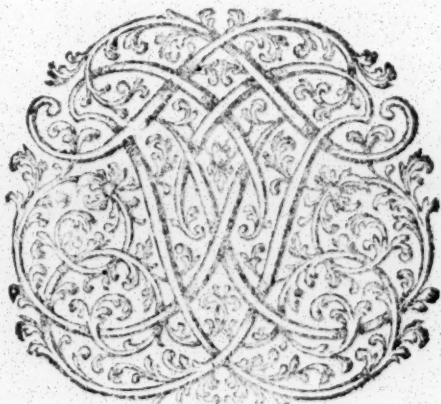
(2)

THE WAY
OF THE
WORLD.
A
COMEDY.

Written by Mr. CONGREVE.

*Adire est operæ pretium, procedere recte
Qui machis non vultis --- Hor. Sat. 2. l. 1.
Metuat doti deprensa ---*

Ibid

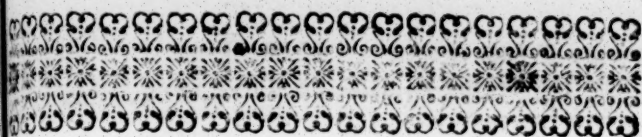


L O N D O N

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TO THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE
RALPH
EARL OF
MOUNTAGUE, &c.
MY LORD,

Whether the World will arraign me of vanity, or not, that I have presum'd to dedicate this Comedy to Your Lordship, I am yet in doubt: Tho' it may be it is some degree of vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the honour of Your Lordship's conversation, cannot be supposed to think very meanly of that which he wou'd offer to your perusal; yet it were to incur the imputation of too much sufficiency, to pretend to such a merit as might abide the test of Your Lordship's censure.

Whatever value may be wanting to this Play while yet it is mine, will be sufficiently made up

to it, when it is once become Your Lordships; and it is my security, that I cannot have over-rated more by my dedication, than Your Lordship will dignifie it by Your Patronage.

That it succeeded on the Stage, was almost beyond my expectation; for but little of it was prepared for that general taste which seems now to be predominant in the palls of our audience.

Those Characters which are meant to be ridicul'd in most of our Comedies, are of Fools so gross that, in my humble opinion, they shou'd rather disturb than divert the well-natur'd and reflecting part of an audience; they are rather objects of charity than contempt; and instead of moving our minds they ought very often to excite our compassion.

This reflection mov'd me to design some Characters, which shou'd appear ridiculous, not so much thro' a natural folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the Stage) as thro' an affected want of a wit, which at the same time that it is affected is also false. As there is some difficulty in the formation of a Character of this nature, so there is some hazard which attends the progress of its success, on the Stage: For many come to a Play, so charg'd with criticism, that they very often let their censure, when thro' their rashness they mistake their aim. This I had occasion lately to observe: For this Play had been acted two or three days, before some of these hasty Judges could have the leisure to distinguish betwixt the Character of a *Witwoud* and a *Truewit*.

I must beg Your Lordships pardon for this digression from the true course of this Epistle; but that may not seem altogether impertinent, I beg, may plead the occasion of it, in part of that excuse

The Dedication.

§

which I stand in need, for recommending this Comedy to Your protection. It is only by the countenance of Your Lordship, and the few so quality'd, that such who write with care and pains can hope to be distinguish'd: For the prostituted name of Poet promiscuously levels all that bear it.

Terence, the most correct Writer in the World, had a *Scipio* and a *Leius*, if not to assist him, at least to support him in his Reputation: And notwithstanding his extraordinary merit, it may be, their countenance was not more than necessary.

The purity of his stile, the delicacy of his turns, and the justness of his Characters, were all of them beauties, which the greater part of his Audience were incapable of tasting. Some of the coarsest strokes of *Plautus*, so severely censur'd by *Horace*, were more likely to affect the multitude; such, who come with expectation to laugh at the last act of a Play, and are better entertain'd with two or three unseasonable jests, than with the artful solution of the Fable.

As *Terence* excell'd in his performances, so had he great advantages to encourage his undertakings; for he built most on the foundations of *Menander*: His Plots were generally modell'd, and his Characters ready drawn to his hand. He copied *Menander*: and *Menander* had no less light in the formation of his Characters, from the observations of *Theophrastus*, of whom he was a disciple; and *Theophrastus*, it is known; was not only the disciple, but the immediate successor of *Aristotle*, the first and greatest Judge of Poetry. These were great models to design by; and the further advantage which *Terence* possess'd, towards giving his Plays the due ornaments of purity of stile, and justness of manners, was not less considerable, from the freedom of con-

versation, which was permitted him with *Lelius* and *Scipio*, two of the greatest and most polite Men of his Age. And indeed, the privilege of such a conversation, is the only certain means of attaining to the perfection of dialogue.

If it has happen'd in any part of this Comedy that I have gain'd a turn of stile, or expression more correct, or a least more corrigible than in those which I have formerly written, I must, with equal pride and gratitude, ascribe it to the honour of Your Lordships admitting me into Your conversation, and that of a Society where every body else was so well worthy of You, in Your retirement last summer from the Town: For it was immediately after, that this Comedy was written. If I have fail'd in my performance, it is only to be regreted, where there were so many, not inferior either to a *Scipio* or *Lelius*, that there shou'd be one wanting, equal in capacity to a *Terence*.

If I am not mistaken, Poetry is almost the only Art, which has not yet laid claim to your Lordship's Patronage. Architecture, and Painting, to the great honour of our Country, have flourish'd under Your influence and protection. In the mean time, Poetry, the eldest sister of all Arts, and parent of most, seems to have resign'd her birth-right, by having neglected to pay her duty to Your Lordship; and by permitting others of a later extraction, to prepossess that place in Your esteem, to which none can pretend a better title. Poetry, in its nature, is sacred to the good and great; the relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the Privilege of Poetry to address to them, and it is their prerogative alone to give it protection.

This receiv'd Maxim is a general Apology for a

Writ

The Dedication.

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Writers who consecrate their labour to great Men:
I could wish, at this time, that this address were
emptied from the common pretence of all dedi-
cations; and that as I can distinguish Your Lordship
among the most deserving, so this offering
might become remarkable by some particular instance
of respect, which should assure Your Lordship; that
I am, with all due sense of Your extream worthi-
ness and humanity,

MY LORD,

Your Lordships most obedient and
most oblig'd humble servant.

WILL. CONGREVE:



PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Betterton.

OF those few Fools, who with ill Stars are cur'd
Sure scribbling Fools, call'd Poets, fare the worst
For they're a sort of Fools which Fortune makes,
And, after she has made 'em Fools, forsakes.
With Natures Oafs 'tis quite a different case,
For Fortune favours all her idiot-Race:
In her own nest the Cuckow-eggs, we find,
O'er which she broods to hatch the Changling-kind
No portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she doats on her adopted care.

Poets are Bubbles, by the Town drawn in,
Suffer'd at first some trifling stakes to win:
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write they venture all they've
won.

He Squire that's butter'd still, is sure to be undone
This Author heretofore, has found your favour,
But pleads no merit from his past behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
Shou'd grants to Poets made, admit Resumption:
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
If that be found a forfeited Estate.

He owns, with toil he wrought the following Scene
But if they're naught ne'er spare him for his pains.

PROLOGUE.

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him the more; have no commiseration
 dulness on mature deliberation.
 swears he'll not resent one hiss'd-off Scene,
 like those peevish Wits, his Play maintain,
 to assert their sense, your taste arraign.
 Plot we think he has, and some new thought;
 Humour too, no farce; but that's a fault.
 ere, he thinks, you ought not to expect,
 so reform'd a Town, who dares correct?
 ease, this time, has been his sole pretence,
 not instruct, lest it shou'd give offence.
 he would be by chance a Knave or Fool expose,
 hurts none here, sure here are none of those.
 short, our Play shall (with your leave to shew it)
 be you one instance of a passive Poet.
 to your judgments yields all resignation;
 have or damn, after your own discretion.



A 5

DRA

DRAMATIS PERSONA

M E N.

FAINALL, In love with Mrs. Marwood.

MIRABELL, In love with Mrs. Millamant.

WITWOOD, } Followers of Mrs. Millamant.
PETULANT, }

Sir Wilful Witwoud, Half Brother to Witwoud,
Nephew to Lady Wishfort

WAITWELL, Servant to Mirabell.

W O M E N.

Lady WISHFORT, Enemy to Mirabell, for having
falsely pretended love to her.

Mrs. MILLAMANT, A fine Lady, Neice to
Lady Wishfort and loves Mirabell.

Mrs. MARWOOD, Friend to Mr. Fainall and
Mirabell.

Mrs. FAINALL, Daughter to Lady Wishfort,
Wife to Fainall, formerly Friend to Mirabell.

FOIBLE, Woman to Lady Wishfort?

MINCING, Woman to Mrs. Millamant.

Dancers, Footmen, and Attendants.

SCENE, LONDON.

The Time equal to that of the presentation.



THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

A C T. I.

S C E N E I.

A Chocolate-House.

*Mirabell and Fainall, Rising from Cards.
Betty waiting.*

Mirabell,

YOU are a fortunate Man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Mira. No, I'll give you your revenge another time,
you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of
something else now, and play too negligently: the
loss of a losing Gamester lessens the pleasure of the
game. I'd no more play with a Man that slighted his
fortune, than I'd make love to a Woman who un-
derstand the loss of her reputation.

A S

Mira.

12 *The WAY of the WORLD.*

Mira. You have a taste extreamly delicate, and for refining on your pleasures.

Fain. Prithce, why so reserv'd ? Something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all : I happen to be grave to-day ; you are gay ; that's all.

Fain. Confess, *Millamant* and you quarrell'd last night, after I left you. My fair Cousin has some humours that wou'd tempt the patience of a Stoick. What some Coxcomb came in, and was well receiv'd by you while you were by ?

Mira. *Witwoud* and *Petulant* ; and what was worse her Aunt, your Wife's Mother, my evil Genius ; or sum up all in her own Name, my old Lady *Wishful* came in. —

Fain. O there it is then — She has a lasting pain for you, and with reason. — What, then my Wife was there ?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. *Marwood*, and three or four more, whom I never saw before. Seeing me, they put on their grave faces, whisper'd one another : they complain'd aloud of the Vapours, and after fell into profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which reason I resolv'd not to stir. At the good old Lady broke thro' her painful taciturnity with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but *Millamant* joining in the argument I rose and with a constrain'd smile told her, I thought nothing was so easie as to know when a visit began to be troublesome ; she reden'd and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she said only in compliance with her Aunt.

Mira. She is more Mistress of her self, than to be oblig'd to the necessity of such a resignation.

Fain. What ! tho' half her Fortune depends upon marrying with my Ladys approbation ?

The WAY of the WORLD. 13

Mira. I was then in such a humour, that I shou'd have been better pleas'd if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you, last night was one of their Cabal-nights; they have 'em three times a week, and meet by turns, at one anothers apartments, where they come together like the Coroners Inquest, to sit upon the murder'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded, and it was once propos'd that all the Male-sex shou'd be excepted; but some body mov'd that to avoid scandal there might be one Man of the community; upon which motion *Witwoud* and *Petulant* were enroll'd Members.

Mira. And who may have been the Foundress of this sect? My Lady *Wishfort*, I warrant, who publishes her denefaction of Mankind; and full of the vigour of Fifty-five, declares for a Friend and *Ratafia*; and let Posterity shift for it self, she'll breed no more.

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her Neice, has provok'd this separation: Had you disssembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mira. I did as much as man cou'd, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a Song in her commendation. Nay, I got a Friend to put her into a Lampoon, and complement her with the imputation of an affair with a young Fellow; which I carry'd so far, that I told her the malicious Town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a drop-sie, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. The Devil's in't, if an old Woman is to be flatter'd further; unless a Man shou'd endeavour downright personally to debauch her; and that my Vertue forbade me. But for the discovery of this Amour, I am indebted to your Friend, or your Wifes Friend, Mrs. *Marwood*.

Fain. What shou'd provoke her to be your Enemy, unless she has made you advances, which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mira

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Mira. She was always civil to me, 'till of late: I confess I am not one of those Coxcombs who are apt to interpret a Womans good manners to her prejudice; and that she who does not refuse 'em ev'ry thing, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant Man, *Mirabell*; and though you may have cruelty enough, not to satisfy a Ladys longings, you have too much generosity, not to be tender of her Honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected; and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mira. You pursue the argument with a distrust which seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern, for which the Lady is more indebted to you than is your Wife.

Fain. Fie, fie Friend, if you grow censorious I must leave you; — I'll look upon the Gamesters in the next room.

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. *Petulant* and *Witwoud* — Bring me some chocolate.

Mira. *Betty*, what says your clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the last canonical hour, Sir.

Mira. How pertinently the Jade answers me? 'Tis almost one a-clock!

[*Looking on his Watch.*] O, y'are come —



SCENE II.

Mirabell and *Footman*.

Mirabell.

WELL; is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

The WAY of the WORLD. 15

Sir, there's such coupling at *Pancras*, that they
behind one another, as 'twere in a Country-dance.
was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appea-
of dispatch, besides, the Parson growing hoarse, we
afraid his lungs wou'd have fail'd before it came to
turn; so we drove round to *Dukes-Place*; and there
were riveted in a trice.

Mira. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Sir. Married and bedded, Sir: I am Witness.

Mira. Have you the Certificate?

Sir. Here it is, Sir.

Mira. Has the Tailor brought *Waitwells* cloaths home,
the new liveries?

Sir. Yes, Sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear;
adjourn the consummation 'till farther order; bid
Well shake his ears, and Dame *Partlet* ruffle up her
sides, and meet me at one a-clock by *Rosamonds*
; that I may see her before she returns to her Lady:
as you tender your ears be secret.

SCENE III.

Mirabell, Fainall, Betty.

Fainall.

OY of your success, *Mirabell*; you look pleas'd.

Mira. Ay; I have been engag'd in a matter of
sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for disco-
very. I am glad this is not a Cabal-night. I wonder,
Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence
ould be discreet, will suffer your Wife to be of such
party.

Fairs. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who
are

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are engag'd are Women and relations: and for the Men they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mira. I am of another opinion. The greater the Comb, always the more the scandal: For a Woman who is not a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a Man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see *Witwoud* entertained by *Millamant*?

Mira. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her due, she has wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any Man think so; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate Lover methinks you are a Man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your Mistress.

Mira. And for a discerning Man, somewhat too passionate a Lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, I like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another Woman wou'd be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, *Fainall*, she once us'd me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces, list'd her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em, and got 'em, by rote: The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other to hate her heartily: To which end I so us'd my self to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me ev'ry hour less and less disturbance; till, in a few days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being displeas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and she will live on't, you are your own Man again.

Mira. Say you so?

The WAY of the WORLD. 17

Fain. Ay, ay, I have experience : I have a Wife, and so

SCENE IV.

[To them] Messenger.

Messenger.

One Squire *Witwoud* here ?

Bet. Yes ? What's your business ?

Mess. I have a Letter for him, from his Brother Sir
Will, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, Friend — That way.

SCENE V.

Mirabell, Fainall, Betty.

Mirabell.

WHAT, is the chief of that noble Family in Town,
Sir *Wilfull Witwoud* ?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him ?

Mir. I have seen him ; he promises to be an extraor-
nary person. I think you have the honour to be related
to him.

Fain. Yes ; he is half Brother to this *Witwoud*, by a
former Wife, who was Sister to my Lady *Wishfort*, my
Mother. If you marry *Millamant*, you must call
him too.

Mir. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

B

Fain.

Fain. He comes to Town in order to equip himself for travel.

Mira. For travel ! Why the Man that I mean above forty.

Fain. No matter for that ; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an Act of Parliament to save the credit of the Nation, and prohibit the exportation of Fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis ; 'tis better to trade with a little loss, than to be quite eaten up, and being overstock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the follies of this Knight-Errant and those of the Squire his Brother, any thing related ?

Fain. Not at all ; *Witwoud* grows by the Knight, like a Medlar grafted on a Crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge ; one is all pulp, the other all core.

Mira. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, the other will be rotten without ever being ripe.

Fain. Sir *Wilfull* is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy — But when he's drunk, he's as loud as the Monster in the Tempest, and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good nature, and does not always want to quarrel.

Mira. Not always ; but as often as his memory serves him, and his Common place of comparisons. He compares a Fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality, he is not excepting you for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest, and call downright rudeness and ill language at satire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length : Behold the original.

S C E N E V I.

(To them) Witwoud.

Witwoud.

Fford me your compassion, my dears ; pity me
up, *Fainall* ; *Mirabell*, pity me.

Mira. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter ?

Wit. No letters for me, *Betty* ?

Ret. Did not a Messenger bring you one but now, Sir ?

Wit. Ay, but no other ?

Ret. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard ; — A Messenger,
Mule, a beast of burden, he has brought me a Letter
from the Fool my Brother, as heavy as a Panegirick
Funeral Sermon, or a copy of commendatory
as long as from one Poet to another : And what's worse,
after as sure a forerunner of the Author, as an Epistle
has forerunner.

Mira. A Fool, and your Brother, *Witwoud* !

Wit. Ay, ay, my half-brother : My half-brother he is ;
He nearer upon Honour.

Mira. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a Fool.

Wit. Good, good, *Mirabell le drole* ! Good, good,
him, don't let's talk of him ; — *Fainall*, how
your Lady ? Gad, I say any thing in the world
of this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that
I should ask a Man of pleasure, and the Town, a ques-
tion at once so foreign and domestick. But I talk like
old maid at a marriage, I don't know what I say :
She's the best Woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or
else

else your commendation wou'd go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in Town lives well with a Wife but *Fainall*. Your judgment, *Mirabel*?

Mira. You had better step and ask his Wife; if you wou'd be credibly inform'd.

Wit. *Mirabell*.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons; — I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily.

Wit. No, but prithee excuse me, — my memory is such a memory. —

Mira. Have a care of such apologies, *Witwoud*; — I never knew a Fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen or his memory.

Fain. What, have you done with *Petulant*?

Wit. He's reckoning his money, — my money it was. I have no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at Play, for you are sure to be too hard for him at reputation. Since you monopolize the wit that is between you, Fortune must be his of course.

Mira. I don't find that *Petulant* confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, *Witwoud*.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, you'd breed debates — *Petulant's* my Friend, and a very honest Fellow, and a very pretty Fellow, and a smattering — Faith and Troth, a pretty deal of odd sort of a small wit: Nay, I'll do him justice. If his Friend, I won't wrong him. — And if he had judgment in the world, — he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my Friend.

Fain. You don't take your Friend to be over-bred?

Wit. No, no, hang him, the Rogue has no manner of wit at all, that I must own — No more breeding than

The WAY of the WORLD. 21

on-bailly, that I grant you : — 'Tis pity; the Fellow
fire and life.

Mira. What, courage?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, — I can't
as to that. — Yes, faith, in a controverſie he'll
contradiſt any body.

Mira. Tho' 'twere a Man whom he fear'd, or a Wo-
man whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before
ſpeaks; — We have all our failings; you are too
upon him, you are faith. Let me excuſe him, —
can defend moſt of faults, except one or two; one he
is, that's the truth on't, if he were my Brother, I
wou'd not acquit him — That indeed I cou'd with were
erwiſe.

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, *Witwoud*?

Wit. O pardon me — expoſe the infirmities of my
friend. — No, my dear, excuſe me there.

Fain. What I warrant he's unſincere, or 'tis ſome ſuch
reparation.

Wit. No, no, what if he be? 'Tis no matter for that,
his wit will excuſe that : A Wit ſhou'd no more be
ſincere, than a Woman conſtant; one argues a decay of
parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too poſitive?

Wit. No, no, his being poſitive is an incentive to ar-
gument, and keeps up converſation.

Fain. Too illiterate?

Wit. That ! that's his happineſs —

his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to
ſhow his natural parts.

Mira. He wants words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want
of words gives me the pleaſure very often to explain
his meaning,

Fain. He's impudent?

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain?

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Wit. No.

Mira. What, he speaks unseasonable truths some times, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion.

Wit. Truths! Ha, ha! No, no, since you will have — I mean, he never speaks truth at all, — That's all. He will lie like a Chambermaid, or a Woman of Quality Porter. Now that is a fault.



S C E N E V I I .

(*To them*) Coachman.

Coachman.

IS Master *Petulant* here, Mistress?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three Gentlewomen in a Coach would sit with him.

Fain. O brave *Petulant*, three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two dishes of Chocolate and a glass of Cinnamon-water.



S C E N E V I I I .

Mirabell, Fainall, Witwoud.

Witwoud.

THAT should be for two fasting Strumpets, Bawd troubled with wind. Now you may see what the three are.

The WAY of the WORLD. 23

Mira. You are very free with your Friends acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, Friendship without freedom is as dull Love without enjoyment, or Wine without Toasting. I'll tell you a secret, these are Trulls whom he allows to coach-hire, and something more by the week, to call on him once a day at publick places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You shall, see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him.... I say this is nothing to what he us'd to do; Before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself....

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean, why he wou'd slip you out of this Chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him..... As soon as your back was turn'd..... whip he was away; then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, flap into a Hackney-Coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he wou'd send in for himself; that I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay and what's more, not finding himself, some times leave a Letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary.... I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming; I ask his pardon.

S C E N E IX.

Petulant, Mirabell, Fainall,
Witwoud, Betty.

Betty.

MIR. the Coach stays.

Pet. Well, well; I come —

B 4

'Sbud

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'Shud a Man had as good be a profess'd Midwife, as profess'd Whoremaster, at this rate; to be knock'd and rais'd at all hours, and in all places. Pox on 'em! I won't come — D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come. Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

Fain. You are very cruel, *Petulant*.

Pet. All's one, let it pass..... I have a humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope they are not Persons of Condition, that you use at this rate?

Pet. Condition! Condition's a dry'd fig, if I am not the humour..... By this hand, if they were your..... a.... a.... your what dee-call-'ems themselves, they must wait till they rub off, if I want appetite.

Mira. What-dee-call-'ems! What are they, *Witwound*?

Wit. Empresses, my dear.... By your what-dee-call-'ems, he means Sultana-Queens.

Pet. Ay, *Roxolanas*.

Mira. Cry you mercy.

Fain. *Witwound* says they are.....

Pet. What does he say th'are?

Wit. I; fine Ladies I say.

Pet. Pass on, *Witwound*,..... Harkee, by this light, Relations,..... Two Coheiressees his Cousins, and an old Aunt, who loves catterwauling better than a Compendious venticle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha; I had a mind to see how the Rogues would come of..... Ha, ha, ha; Gad I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my Mother and my Sisters.

Mira. No!

Wit. No; the Rogues wit and readiness of invention shall charm me, dear *Petulant*.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion, it saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in

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life, as to have something to brag of the next time he
 rock'd his court to *Millamant*, and swear he has abandoned
 x on the whole Sex for her sake.

come. *Mira*. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions
 yet? I shall cut your throat, sometime or other *Pe-*
 out, about that business.

our to *Pe*. Ay, ay, let that pass.... There are other throats
 to cut....

dition. *Mira*. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pe. Not I.... I mean nobody, I know nothing.....

am not there are Uncles and Nephews in the World.....

a...a they may be Rival..... What then? All's one for

st wait.....

Mira. How! Harkee *Petulant*, come hither.... Explain,

ey, I will call your Interpreter.

Pe. Explain; I know nothing — Why you have an

e-call-ede, have you not, lately come to Town, and lod-

by my Lady *Wishforts*?

Mira. True.

Pe. Why that's enough — You and he are not
 ends; and if he shou'd marry and have a child, you
 be disinherited, ha?

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

s light *Pe*. All's one for that; why then say I know some-
 , and so.

han a *Comra*. Come, thou art an honest Fellow *Petulant*, and
 make love to my Mistress, thou sha't, Faith. What

the Roge thou heard of my Uncle?

t be ang *Pe*. I, nothing I. If throats are to be cut, let swords

er and m, snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira. O Raillery. Come, I know thou art in the

mens secrets — What you're a Cabalist, I know you

f inventi at *Millamant's* last night, after I went was there

mention made of my Uncle, or me? Tell me, if

a hadst but good nature equal to thy wit *Petulant*,

omplexio *Witwoud*, who is now thy competitor in Fame,

ould shew as dim by thee as a dead Whiting's eye by

is is in Pearl of Orient; he wou'd no more be seen by thee.

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than Mercury is by the Sun: Come, I'm sure thou wilt tell me.

Pet. If I do, will, you grant me common-sense for the future?

Mira. Faith I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heav'n may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, harkee.

Fain. *Petulant* and you both will find *Mirabel* as warm a Rival as a Lover.

Wit. Pshaw, pshaw, that she laughs at *Petulant* is plain. And for my part — But that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should — Harkee — To tell you a secret, but let it go no further — Between Friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain Woman.

Fain. I thought you had dy'd for her.

Wit. Umh — No —

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else. Now, Demme, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as *Cleopatra*. *Mirabell* is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night; and heard something of an Uncle to *Mirabell*, who is lately come to Town, — and is between him and the best part of his Estate; *Mirabell* and he are at some distance. My Lady *Wishfort* has been told; and you know she hates *Mirabell*, worse than a Quaker hates a Parrot, or than a Fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this Uncle has seen Mrs. *Millamant* or not, I cannot say; but that were items of such a Treaty being in embryo; and it should come to life, poor *Mirabell* would be in some way unfortunately tobb'd i' faith,

Fain. 'Tis impossible *Millamant* should harken to it.

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Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell, she's a Woman
of a kind of a humorist.

Mira. And this is the sum of what you cou'd collect
tonight.

Pet. The quintessence. Maybe *Witwoud* knows more,
but I shal'd longer — Besides they never mind him; they
say any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest Favourite.

Pet. Ay *tête à tête*; but not in publick, because I
make remarks.

Mira. You do?

Pet. Ay, ay, pox I'm malicious, man: Now he's
not, you know, they are not in awe of him — The
Duke's well bred, he's what you call a — What-
ever call-'em; A fine Gentleman, but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity
requires. *Fainall*, are you for the *Mall*?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the Ladies talk'd
of being there.

Mira. I thought you were oblig'd to watch for your
brother Sir *Willfulls* arrival.

Wit. No, no, he comes to his Aunts my Lady *Wish-*
am's; pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what
shall I do with the Fool?

Pet. Beg him for his Estate, that I may beg you after-
wards, and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare *Petulant*; thou art as quick as fire in a fro-
morning; thou shalt to the *mall* with us; and we'll
be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a humour to be severe.

Mira. Are you? Pray then walk by your selves, —
it is not us be necessary to your putting the Ladies out
of countenance, with your senseless ribaldry which
you roar out aloud as often as they pass by; and when
you have made a handsome Woman blush, then you
think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what? Then let 'em either shew their in-
nocence

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nocence by not understanding what they hear, or shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand — I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt, or ill breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so; You are the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

*Where modesty's ill manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.*



A C T. II.

S C E N E I.

St. James's Park.

Mrs. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Fainall.

AY, ay, dear *Marwood*, if we will be happy, we must find the means in our selves, and among our selves. Men are ever in extremes, either doating or averse. While they are Lovers, if they have wit and sense, their jealousies are insupportable: And

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D. cease to love, (we ought to think at least) they
they look upon us with horror and distaste; they
us like the Ghosts of what we were, and as from
fly from us.

Mrs. Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of
that Love shou'd ever die before us; and that the
so often shou'd out-live the Lover. But say what
will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been
To pass our youth in dull indifference, to re-
the sweets of life, because they once must leave
it as preposterous, as to wish to have been born
because we one day must be old. For my part,
youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust
my possession.

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion
Mankind, only in compliance to my Mothers hu-
mour?

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free, I have no taste of
those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of
must entertain themselves, apart from Men. We
affect endearments to each other, profess eternal
friendships, and seem to dote like Lovers; but 'tis not
our natures long to persevere. Love will resume
its Empire in our breasts, and every Heart, or soon
relate, receive and re-admit him as its lawful Tyrant.

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceiv'd ! Why
you profess a libertine.

Mrs. Mar. You see my Friendship by my freedom.
Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments
agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never.

Mrs. Mar. You hate Mankind?

Mrs. Fain. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your Husband?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently; ay, tho' I say it
meritoriously.

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs. Fain. There.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mar. I join with you; what I have said been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those pers Men?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em; and am come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the Spirit of an *Amazon Penthesilea*.

Mrs. Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes carry my aversion further.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mrs. Mar. Faith by marrying; if I cou'd but find that lov'd me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do my self the violence undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs. Fain. You would not make him a Cuckold?

Mrs. Mar. No; but I'd make him believe I did, that's as bad.

Mrs. Fain. Why had not you as good do it?

Mrs. Mar. O if he shou'd ever discover it he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but he would have him ever to continue upon the Rack of ill and jealousy.

Mrs. Fain. Ingenious Mischief! Wou'd thou were married to *Mirabell*.

Mrs. Mar. Wou'd I were.

Mrs. Fain. You change colour.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs. Fain. Sodo I; but I can hear him nam'd. What reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never lov'd him; he is, and always insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion one wou'd think it disssembled; for you have laid fault to his charge, of which his Enemies must acquit him.

Mrs. Mar. O, then it seems you are one of his

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ve said Enemies. Methinks you look a little pale; and
you flush again.

those Mrs. Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the
men.

am Mrs. Mar. What ails you?

o do, is Mrs. Fain. My Husband. Don't you see him? He
d short upon me unawares, and has almost over-
Amazon me.



S C E N E I I.

To them Fainall and Mirabell.

Mrs. Marwood.

A, ha, ha; he comes opportunely for you.

it? Mrs. Fain. For you, for he has brought Mi-
he wou'd with him.

in; Mrs. Fain. My Dear.

ack of Mrs. Fain. My Soul.

thou Mrs. Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs. Fain. D'ye think so?

Mira. He is the only Man that does, Madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only Man that wou'd tell me so at
all; and the only Man from whom I cou'd hear it
without mortification.

m'd. Mrs. Fain. O my dear I am satisfy'd of your tenderness;
ar? know you cannot resent any thing from me; espe-
always wou'd what is an effect of my concern.

r aver Mrs. Fain. Mr. Mirabell, my Mother interrupted
ave laid out in a pleasant relation last-night: I wou'd fain hear
must acquit.

e of his Mira. The persons concern'd in that affair, have
vo'd a tolerable reputation. — I am afraid Mr. Fainall
will be censorious.

Mrs.

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Mrs. *Fain*. He has a humour more prevailing than curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the heat of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another, by being seen to walk with my Wife. This way Mr. *Mirabell*, and I dare promise will oblige us both.



S C E N E I I I.

Fainall, Mrs. Marwood.

Fainall.

EXcellent creature! Well, sure if I shou'd live rid of my Wife, I shou'd be a miserable Man.

Mrs. *Mar*. Ay!

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence must put an end to my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must surrender his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, to sit down and weep like *Alexander*, when he was other worlds to conquer.

Mrs. *Mar*. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs. *Mar*. Pray let us? I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. *Mar*. Of whom?

Fain. Of *Mirabell*.

Mrs. *Mar*. If I am, is it inconsistent with my duty to you that I am tender of your honour?

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were no fellow-feeling between my Wife and him.

Mrs. *Mar*. I think she does not hate him to that degree she wou'd be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

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Mrs. Mar. It may be you are deceiv'd.

Mrs. Mar. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. Mar. What?

Mrs. Mar. That I have been deceiv'd Madam, and you false.

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Mrs. Mar. To let you know I see through all your little — Come you both love him, and both have feign'dly dissimbl'd your aversion. Your mutual jealousy of one another, have made you clash 'till you both struck fire; I have seen the warm contention red'ning on your cheeks & sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Mrs. Mar. I do not — 'T was for my ease to oversee willfully neglect the gross advances made him by my Wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures; and take her closer to my arms in full security. But could I think, because the nodding Husband would not suspect, that e'er the watchful Lover slept?

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me? With infidelity, with loving another, with being false to *Mirabell*.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew any proof that can confirm your groundless accusation against him.

Mrs. Mar. And wherefore do you hate him? He is innocent and your resentment follows his neglect. An innocent man. The injuries you have done him are a proof: His interposing in his love. What cause had you for the discoveries of his pretended Passion? To undeceive the credulous Aunt, and be the officious observer of his match with *Millamant*?

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my Lady urg'd me: I profess'd a friendship to her; and could not be of easier nature so abus'd by that dissembler.

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Fain. What, was it Conscience then? Profess'd Friendship! O the pious Friendships of the Female Sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of Men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my Wives Friend to me.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been false to you thro' strict fidelity to you, and sacrific'd my Friendship to keep my Love inviolate? And have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of my merit! To you it shou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious: And do you reflect that guilt upon me which shou'd ly buried in your bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant to remind you of the slight account you once made of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false; you urg'd it with deliberate malice — 'Twas spoke in scorn, and I never forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you lov'd you cou'd forgive a Whore: But you are stung to find you are discover'd.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discover'd. You too shall be discover'd; be sure you shall. I can but be pos'd — If I do it my self I shall prevent your success.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your Wife; own what's past between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't — I'll publish to the World the injuries you have done me both in my Fame and Fortune: With both I treat you, you Bankrupt in Honour, as indigent of Wealth.

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Fain. Your Fame I have preserv'd. Your Fortune
 been bestow'd as the prodigality of your love
 would have it, in pleasures which we both have shar'd.
 had not you been false, I had ere this repaid
 'Tis true — had you permitted *Mirabell* with
Amant to have stol'n their Marriage, my Lady had
 incens'd beyond all means of reconciliation: *Milla-*
 had forfeited the moiety of her Fortune; which
 would have descended to my Wife: — And
 therefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize
 a rich Widows wealth, and squander it on Love
 you?

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence.

Fain. Death, am I not married? What's pretence?
 I not imprison'd, fetter'd? Have I not a Wife?
 a Wife that was a Widow, a young Widow, a
 some Widow; and would be again a Widow,
 that I have a heart of proof, and something of a
 constitution to baffle thro' the ways of wedlock and
 World. Will you yet be reconcil'd to Truth
 me?

Mrs. Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are incon-
 — I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. Mar. I loath the name of Love after such
 age; and next to the guilt with which you would
 perse me, I scorn you most. Farewel.

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs. Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Mar. I care not — Let me go — Break my
 ties, do — I'd leave 'em to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the World. Have
 no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs. Mar. Well, I have deserv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling! — O that — Well,
 is not yet —

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Fain. What? What is it not? What is not yet? It is not yet too late —

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late — I have the comfort.

Fain. It is to love another.

Mrs. Mar. But not to loath, detest, abhor *Mrs. Mar.* kind, my self and the whole treacherous World.

Fain. Nay, this is Extravagance — Come, I ask your pardon — No tears — I was to blame. I could not love you and be easie in my doubts — Pray to bear — I believe you; I'm convinc'd I've done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way will make amends — I'll hate my Wife yet more, damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, any where, to another World. I'll marry thee — Be pacify'd — 'sdeath they come, hide your face, your tears — you have a Mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be perswaded.



S C E N E I I I.

Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. FAINALL.

They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. Fain. While I only hated my Husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despis'd him, he is too offensive.

Mira. O you shou'd hate with prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Yes, for I have lov'd with indiscretion.

Mira. You shou'd have just so much disgust to your husband, as may be sufficient to make you hate your Lover.

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Mrs. Fain. You have been the cause that I have lov'd without bounds, and wou'd you set limits to that passion, of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this Man?

Mira. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that Idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produc'd that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where cou'd you have fix'd a Fathers name with credit, but on a husband? I knew *Fainall* to be a Man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing Friend, a false and designing Lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour, have gain'd a reputation with the town, enough to make that Woman stand excus'd, who has suffer'd her self to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrific'd to the occasion; worse had not answer'd to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs. Fain. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, *Mirabell*.

Mira. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your pow'r to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs. Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mira. *Waitwell*, my Servant.

Mrs. Fain. He is an humble Servant to *Foible* my Mothers Woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mira. Care is taken for that — She is won and worn by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs. Fain. Who?

Mira. *Waitwell* and *Foible*. I wou'd not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your Mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like *Mosca* in the *Fox*, stand upon terms; so I made him sure before-

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Mrs. Fain. So if my poor Mother is caught in contract, you will discover the imposture betimes and release her by producing a certificate of her Gallant's former marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her Neice, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs. Fain. She talk'd last night of endeavouring a match between *Millamant* and your uncle.

Mira. That was by *Foibles* direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success for I believe my Lady will do any thing to get an husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good Lady wou'd marry any thing that resembled a man, though 't were no more than what a Butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. Fain. Female frailty! We must all come to this if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite, when the true is decay'd.

Mira. An old Womans appetite is deprav'd like that of a Girl — 'Tis the green-Sickness of a second childhood; and like the faint offer of a latter spring serves but to usher in the fall; and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs. Fain. Here's your Mistress.

S C E N E I V.

To Them] Mrs. Millamant, Wit-
woud, Mincing.

M I R A B E L L.

HERE she comes i'faith full sail, with her fan
spread and streamers out, and a shoal of Fools for
— ha, no, I cry her mercy.

Fain. I see but one poor empty Sculler; and
shows her Woman after him.

Mira. You seem to be unattended, Madam, —
us'd to have the *Beau mond* throng after you; and
a pack of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Fain. Like moths about a candle — I had like to have
my comparison for want of breath.

Mira. O I have deny'd my self airs to-day. I have
pass'd as fast through the croud —

Fain. As a Favourite just disgraced; and with as few
followers.

Mira. Dear Mr. Witwoud, truce with your simili-
tude: For I am as sick of 'em —

Fain. As a Physician of a good air — I cannot help it,
Mira, tho'tis against my self.

Mira. Yet again! *Mincing*, stand between me and
Wit.

Fain. Do, Mrs. *Mincing*, like a skreen before a great
fire. I confess I do blaze to day, I am too bright.

Fain. But dear *Millamant*, why were you so
late?

Mira. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haste?
I ask'd every living thing I met for you; I have
wait'd after you as after a new fashion.

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Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes — nay met her Husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave *Witwoud*, that were like enquiring after an old fashion, to ask a Husband for a Wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dress'd before I came abroad.

Milla. Ay, that's true — O but then I had — *Mincing* what had I? Why was I so long?

Minc. O Mem, your Laship staid to peruse a packet of letters.

Milla. O ay, letters — I had letters — I am perfect with letters — I hate letters — no body knows how to write letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why — They serve one to pin up ones hair.

Wit. Is that the way? pray, Madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Milla. Only with those in verse, Mr. *Witwoud* never pin up my hair with prose. I think I try'd once *Mincing*.

Minc. O Mem, I shall never forget it.

Milla. Ay, poor *Mincing* tift and tift all the morning.

Minc. 'Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll venture.

Mem. And all to no purpose. But when your Lash pins it up with Poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure and so crisp.

Wit. Indeed, so crisp?

Minc. You're such a Critick, Mr. *Witwoud*.

Milla. Mirabell, Did not you take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away — now I think on't I'm angry — No, now I think on't I'm pleas'd — For I believe I gave you some pain.

Mira. Does that please you?

Milla. Infinitely, I love to give pain.

Mira. You wou'd affect a cruelty which is not your

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s — no nature; your true vanity is in the power of
her.

like eng. O I ask your pardon for that—Ones cruelty
and for is power, and when one parts with ones cruelty
parts with ones power; and when one has parted
t, I co that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object
me about power, to destroy your Lover — And then how

—*Miranda* how loft a thing you'll be ! Nay, 'tis true : You
longer handsome when you've lost your Lover :

cruse a beauty dies upon the instant: For beauty is the
gift; 'tis he bestows your charms—Your glass

a perfect cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looks how glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be

is not known by it, and discover beauties in it: For that reason our praises, rather than your Face.

do you see. O the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear
must be. If they did not commend us, we were not

Witwoud. Time! Now you must know they cou'd not com-
one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the Lo-

try'd on first — Lord, what is a Lover, that it can give?
One makes Lovers as fast as one pleases, and they

As long as one pleases, and they die as soon as
the pleasures: And then if one pleases one makes more.

Very pretty. Why you make no more of
Lovers, Madam, than of making so many

the next *alla*. One no more owes ones' beauty to a lover,

does wit to an eccho: They can but reflect what
look and say; vain empty things if we are silent

ceptions. Yet, to those two vain empty things, you

—For the two the greatest pleasures of your life.
—For the. How so?

To your Lover you owe the pleasure of hearing
 yourselves prais'd; and to an eccho the pleasure of

But I know a Lady that loves talking so inces-

you C 5 family

fantly, she won't give an eccho fair play; she has an everlasting rotation of tongue, that an eccho must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Milla. O Fiction; *Fainall*, let us leave these matters.

Mira. Draw off *Witwoud*.

[*Aside to Mrs. Fain.*]

Mrs. Fain. Immediately; I have a word or two to say to Mr. *Witwoud*.



SCENE V.

Millamant, Mirabell, Mincing.

Mirabell.

I Wou'd beg a little private audience too — You have the tyranny to deny me last night; tho' you know I came to impart a secret to you that concern'd love.

Milla. You saw I was engag'd.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; Things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible but they shou'd admire you, they are not capable: Or if they were, it shou'd be to you as a mortification; for to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Milla. I please my self, — Besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mira. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

Milla. Yes, the vapours; fools are physick for the next to *Assa fatida*.

Mira. You are not in a course of fools?

The W.
Milla. *Mirabell*.
— you'll
all, not to
Mira. Not
Milla. And
the same;
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you *Mira*
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Mira. Can
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Milla. To
our Plot lik
Mira. But
Milla. W

the WAY of the WORLD. 43

Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom -- you'll displease me -- I think I must resolve, not to have you -- We shan't agree.

Mira. Not in our physick it may be.

Milla. And yet our distemper in all likelihood will be the same; for we shall be sick of one another. I can endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed: 'tis to act always by advice, and so tedious to be sensible of one's faults -- I can't bear it. Well, I won't quarrel with you *Mirabell* -- I'm resolv'd -- I think -- You may laugh, ha, ha, ha. What wou'd you give, that you might help loving me?

Mira. I wou'd give something that you did not want, I cou'd not help it.

Milla. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what would you say to me?

Mira. I say that a Man may as soon make a friend of his Wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a man with plaindealing and sincerity.

Milla. Sententious *Mirabell*! Prithee don't look with so violent and inflexible wife face, like *Solomon* at dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mira. You are merry, Madam, but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Milla. What, with that face; No, if you keep that countenance, 'tis impossible I shou'd hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a sick face. Ha, ha, ha -- Well I won't laugh, don't be so fish -- Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy can watch light. Well *Mirabell*, if ever you will woo me now -- Nay, if you are so tedious, you will -- I see they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment --

Milla. To hear you tell me *Foible's* marry'd, and a Plot like to speed -- No.

Mira. But how you came to know it --

Milla. Without the help of the Devil, you can't imagine;

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gine; unless she should tell me her self. Which of
two it may have been, I will leave you to consider
and when you have done thinking of that, think
of me.

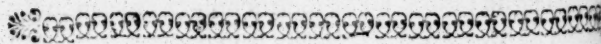


S C E N E V I.

Mirabell alone.

Mirabell.

I Have something more — Gone — Think of you
I think of a whirlwind, tho't were in a whirl-
were a case of more steady contemplation; a very
quility of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in
windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than
heart of a Man that is lodg'd in a Woman. There
no point of the compass to which they cannot turn
and by which they are not turn'd; and by one as
as another; for motion not method is their occupa-
To know this, and yet continue to be in love, I
be made wise from the dictates Reason, and yet
severe to play the fool by the force of instinct. —
here come my pair of turtles, — What, billing
sweetly? is not *Valentines* day over with you yet?



S C E N E V I I.

[*To him*] Waitwell, Foible.

Mirabell.

Sirrah, *Waitwell*, why sure you think you were
Sry'd for your own recreation, and not for my
veniencey.

The WAY of the WORLD. 45

Wait. Your pardon, Sir. With submission, we indeed been solacing in lawful delights, but still an eye to business, Sir. I have instructed her as as I could. If she can take your directions as easily as my instructions, Sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

Mira. Give you joy, Mrs. *Foible*.

Foib. O las, Sir, I'm so agham'd — I'm afraid my has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, Sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did indeed, Sir. It was my fault she did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my Lady as you instructed me Sir. I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle and that I would put her Ladyships picture in my pocket to shew him; which I'll be sure to say has made so enamour'd of her beauty, that he burns with patience to lye at her Ladyships feet and worship original.

Mira. Excellent *Foible*! Matrimony has made you content in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, Sir. I think so.

Foib. You have seen Madam *Millamant*, Sir?

Mira. Yes.

Foib. I told her, Sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity; she had so much company last night.

Mira. Your diligence will merit more--In the mean time --

[Gives money.]

Foib. O dear Sir, your humble Servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Stand off Sir, not a penny — Go on and prosper, *Foible* -- The lease shall be made good and the farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foib. I don't question your generosity, Sir: And you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, Sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my Lady is at her

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her Toilet, and can't dress 'til I come -- 'O dear, I'm sure that [*Looking out.*] was Mrs Marwood that was by in a mask; if she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my Lady. I'll make haste home and press her. Your Servant Sir. B'w'y Waitwell.



SCENE VIII.

Mirabell, Waitwell.

Waitwell.

SIR Rowland if you please. The jade's so pert she preferment she forgets her self.

Mira. Come Sir, will you endeavour to forget your self -- and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why Sir, it will be impossible I should remember my self -- Marry'd, Knighted and attended all in one day! 'Tis enough to make any Man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover acquaintance and familiarity with my former self, and fall from my transformation to a reformation.

Waitwell. Nay I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither -- for now I remember me, I'm married and can't be my own man again.

*Any ther's my grief; that's the sad change of life;
To lose my Title, and yet keep my Wife.*

The V

A Ro

Lady Wis

Merciful,
Peg.

Lady. I ha
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in me. Fete
sweet-heart?
Look you ho
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was?

Peg. The
the Cherry
Lady. Rai

Fool

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Peg. Lord
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Lady. A
ry-Brandy tl



A C T. I I I.

S C E N E I.

A Room in Lady Wishforts house.

Lady Wishfort at her Toilet, Peg waiting.

Lady.

Merciful, no news of *Foible* yet?

Peg. No Madam.

Lady. I have no more patience . . . If I have not
 ted my self 'till I am pale again there's no veracity
 me. Fetch me the red . . . the red, do you hear,
 eet-heart? An errant ash colour, as I'm a Person.
 ok you how this wench stirs! Why dost thou not
 h me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, Mo-
 ?

Peg. The red *Ratiffa* does your Ladiship mean,
 the Cherry-Brandy?

Lady. *Ratiffa*, Fool. No, Fool. Not the *Ratiffa*,
 ol . . . Grant me patience! I mean the *Spanish*
 er, Idiot, Complexion darling. Paint, Paint, Paint,
 t thou unsterstand that, Changeling, dangling thy
 ds like bobbins before thee? Why dost thou not stir.
 ppet? thou wooden thing upon wires.

Peg. Lord, Madam, your Ladiship is so impatient
 I cannot come at the Paint, Madam, Mrs. *Foible*
 lok'd it up, and carry'd the key with her.

Lady. A Pox take you both . . . Fetch me the Cher-
 Brandy then.

S C E N E

SCENE II.

Lady Wishfort.

I'M as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. *Quaker*
the Curates Wife, that's always breeding. . . .
come, come, Wench, what art thou doing, sup-
tasting? Save thee, dost thou not know the bottle

SCENE III.

Lady Wishfort, Peg with a Bottle and a
China cup.

Peg.

M Adam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady. A cup, save thee, and what a cup
thou brought! Dost thou take me for a Fairy, to
out of an *Acorn*? Why didst thou not bring thy
ble? Hast thou ne'er a brass-thimble clinking in
pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Co-
fill Fill... So... again. See who that is...
knocks.] Set down the bottle first. Here, here,
the table... What, wou'dst thou go with the
in thy hand like a Tapster? As I'm a person,
Wench has liv'd in an Inn upon the road, before
came to me; like *Maritornes* the *Asturian* in
Quixote. No *Foible* yet.

Peg. No Madam, Mrs. Marwood.

Lady. O Marwood; let her come in. Come in
Marwood.

SCENE



S C E N E I V.

(To them) Mrs. Marwood.

Mrs. Marwood.

I surpriz'd to find your Ladiship in *des habillé* at this time of day.

Lady. *Foible's* a lost thing ; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came mark'd through the Park, in conference with *Mirabell*.

Lady. With *Mirabell*! You call my blood into my face, with mentioning that Traitor. She durst not have confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which if I'm detected I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon *Foible* to detect me, I'm ruin'd. My dear Friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs. Mar. O Madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. *Foibles* integrity.

Lady. O, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt Integrity it self. If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah dear *Marwood*, what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her—Dear Friend retire into my Closet, that I may examine her with more freedom. You'll pardon me, dear Friend, I can make bold with you—There are books over the Chimney—*Quarles* and *Pryn*, and the *Short View of the Stage* ; with *Bunyan's* works, to entertain you.—Go, you thing, and send [To Peg.



S C E N E V.

Lady Wishfort, Foible.

Lady.

O *Foible*, Where hast thou been? what hast thou doing?

Foib. Madam, I have seen the Party.

Lady. But what hast thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your Ladiship has done, and are to I have only promis'd. But a Man so enamour'd transported! Well, if worshipping of Pictures be a — Poor Sir *Rowland*, I say.

Lady. The Miniature has been counted like — hast thou not betray'd me, *Foible*? Hast thou not detest me to that faithless *Mirabell*? What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. So, the Devil has been beforehand with what shall I say? — Alas, Madam, could I help it? I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you heard how he us'd me, and all upon your Ladiship's account, I'm sure you wou'd not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst I could have been. But he had a fling at your Ladiship too; and that could not hold: But i' faith I gave him his own.

Lady. Me! What did the filthy Fellow say?

Foib. O Madam, 'tis a shame to say what he said. With his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his head. Humh (says he) what, you are a hatching some (says he) you are so early abroad, or catering (says he) ferreting for some disbanded Officer, I warrant — pay is but thin subsistence (says he) — Well, what pension does your Lady propose? Let me see (says he)

The WAY of the WORLD: SE

at, she must come down pretty deep now, she's
superannuated (says he) and...

Lady. Ods my life, I'll have him: I'll have him
murder'd. I'll have him poison'd. Where does he eat?
I'll marry a Drawer to have him poison'd in his Wine.
I'll send for Robin from Lockets... Immediately.

Foib. Poison him! Poisoning's too good for him.
Starve him, Madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland,
I'll get him disinherited. O you would bless your self,
I'll hear what he said.

Lady. A Villain, superannuated!

Foib. Humh (says he) I hear you are laying designs
against me too (says he) and Mrs. Millamant is to marry
your Uncle; (he does not suspect a word of your Ladiships)
(says he) I'll fit you for that, I warrant you (says
he) I'll hamper you for that (says he) you and your old
frillery too (says he) I'll handle you...

Lady. Audacious Villain! handle me! would he
first... Frippery! old Frippery! Was there ever such
a foul mouth'd Fellow? I'll be marry'd to-morrow,
I'll be contracted to-night.

Foib. The sooner the better, Madam.

Lady. Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou? when,
I'll be marry'd?

Foib. Incontinently, Madam. No new Sheriffs Wife
expects the return of her Husband after Knighthood,
with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for
his dear hour of kissing your Ladiships hand after
dinner.

Lady. Frippery! superannuated frippery! I'll Frippery
the Villain! I'll reduce him to frippery and rags:
I'll Tatterdemalion... I hope to see him hung with
rags, like a Long-Lane Penthouse, or a Gibbet-Thief.
I'll slander-mouth'd Railer: I warrant the spendthrift
Prodigal's in debt as much as the Million Lottery, or
the whole Court upon a Birth-day. I'll spoil his credit
with his Tailor. Yes, he shall have my Neice with
her Fortune, he shall.

Foib. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first,
D 2 and

and angle into *Black-Fryars* for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

Lady. Ay dear *Foible*; thank thee for that, dear *Foible*. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features, to receive Sir *Rowland* with any oeconomy of Face. This Wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decay'd. Look *Foible*.

Foib. Your Ladiship has frown'd a little too rashly indeed Madam. There are some cracks discernable in the white vernish.

Lady. Let me see the Glass... Cracks, say'st thou? Why I am arrantly flea'd... I look like an old peel'd wax. Thou must repair me, *Foible*, before Sir *Rowland* comes or I shall never keep up to my Picture.

Foib. I warrant you, Madam; a little Art once mends your Picture like you; and now a little of the face Art must make you like your Picture. Your Picture must fit for you, Madam.

Lady. But art thou sure Sir *Rowland* will not come to come? Or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, *Foible*, and push? For if he shou'd not be importunate... I shall never break my corums... I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance... Oh no, I can never advance... I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir *Rowland* is better bred, than to put a Lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too forward neither... I won't give him despair.. But a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foib. A little scorn becomes your Ladiship.

Lady. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best... sort of a dyingness... You see that Picture has a little of a... Ha *Foible*? swimmingness in the eyes... I'll look so... My Neice affects it; but she wears those features. Is Sir *Rowland* handsome? Let my Toilet be remov'd... I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir *Rowland* here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know I'll be surpriz'd. I'll be taken by surprize.

Foib. By Storm, Madam. Sir *Rowland's* a brisk Man.

Th
Lady.

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O *Foib.*
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Foib. D

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Lady. Is he! O then he'll importune if he's a brisk Man I shall save decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O I'm glad he's a brisk Man. Let my things be remov'd good *Foible*.



SCENE VI.

Mrs. Fainall, Foible.

Mrs. Fainall.

Foible. I have been in a fright, lest I shou'd come too late. That Devil, *Marwood*, saw you in the park with *Mirabell*, and I'm afraid will discover it to my Lady.

Foib. Discover what, Madam?

Mrs. Fain. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face: I am privy to the whole design, & know that *Waitwell*, to whom thou wert this morning marry'd, is to personate *Mirabel's* Uncle, and as such, winning my Lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which *Mirabell* only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my Cousin and her Fortunes left to her own disposal.

Foib. O dear Madam, I beg your pardon It was not my confidence in your Ladiship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your Ladiship and Mr. *Mirabell*, might have hinder'd his communicating this secret.

Mrs. Fain. Dear *Foible*, forget that.

Foib. O dear Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* is such a sweet winning Gentleman. . . But your Ladiship is the pattern of generosity. . . Sweet Lady, to be so good! Mr. *Mirabell* cannot chuse but be grateful. I find your Ladiship has his heart still. Now Madam. I can safely tell your

Ladiship our success. Mrs. *Marwood* had told my Lady but I warrant I manag'd my self. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my Lady that Mr. *Mirabell* rail'd at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is so incens'd, that she'll be contracted to *Rowland* to-night, she says;... I warrant I work her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a *Welsh* maiden-head.

Mrs. *Fain*. O rare *Foible*!

Foib. Madam, I beg your Ladiship to acquaint Mr. *Mirabell* of his success; I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him... besides, I believe Mr. *Marwood* watches me... She has a months mind; I know Mr. *Mirabell* can't abide her... [*Calls*.] I'll remove my Lady's Toilet. Madam, your servant. My Lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, I'll flay

Mrs. *Fain*. I'll go with you up the back stairs, I should meet her.

S C E N E VII.

Mrs. Marwood alone.

I Ndeed, Mrs. *Engine*, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why this Wench is the *Passe-partout* a very Master-key to every bodys strong-box. My Friend *Fainall*, have you carry'd it so swimmingly, I thought there was something in it; but it seems to over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite then, but from a surfeit; else you could not be so cool to fall from a principal to be an assistant to procure for him! A pattern of generosity, she confess. Well, Mr. *Fainall*, you have met with your

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The WAY of the WORLD. 55

match... O Man, Man! Woman, Woman! The Devil's
 As: If I were a Painter, I would draw him like
 an Idiot, a Driveler with a bib and bells. Man shou'd
 have his head and horns, and Woman the rest of him.
 Poor simple Fiend! Madam *Marwood* has a month's
 mind, but he can't abide her... 'Twere better for him
 you had not been his Confessor in that affair; without
 you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not
 prove another pattern of generosity, and stalk for him
 till he takes his stand to aim at a Fortune;... he has
 not oblig'd me to that with those excesses of himself;
 and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good
 lady, panting ripe, with a heart full of hope, and a
 head full of care, like any Chymist upon the day of
 projection.



S C E N E V I I I.

[To her] *Lady Wishfort.*

Lady.

O Dear *Marwood*, what shall I say for this rude
 forgetfulness...

But my dear Friend is all goodness.

Mrs. Mar. No Apologies, dear Madam; I have been
 very well entertain'd.

Lady. As I'm a Person I am in a very chaos to think
 shou'd so forget my self... but I have such an olio
 of affairs, really I know not what to do... [Calls]

... *Foible*... I expect my Nephew Sir *Wilfull* ev'ry
 moment too:... Why *Foible*... He means to travel
 for improvement.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks Sir *Wilfull* shou'd rather think
 of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is
 turn'd of forty.

D 4

Lady.

Lady. O he's in less danger of being spoil'd by his travels—I am against my Nephews marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd discretion to chuse for himself.

Mrs. Mar. Methinks *Mrs. Millamant* and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards, 'tis a thing very usual with young Gentlemen.

Lady. I promise you I have thought on't—And first 'tis your judgment, 'I'll think on't again. I assure you I will; I value your judgment extreamly. On my word I'll propose it.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] *Foible.*

Lady.

Come, come *Foible*—I had forget my Nephew—Come here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foib. Mr. *Witwoud* and M. *Petulant* are cometo see with your Ladiship.

Lady. O Dear, I can't appear 'till I am dress'd. *De Marwood* shall I be free with you again, and beg to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear Friend excuse me.

SCENE X.

Mrs. Marwood, Mrs. Millamant, Mincing.

Millamant.

SURE never any thing was so unbred as that odious Man—*Marwood*, your Servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a colour, what's the matter?

Milla. That horrid Fellow *Petulant* has provok'd me to a flame—I have broke my Fan—*Mincing*, lend me yours;—Is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mrs. Mar. No. What has he done.

Milla. Nay he has done nothing; he has only talk'd—Nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry thing that has been said. For my part, I thought *Witwoud* and he wou'd have quarrell'd.

Mine. I vow Mem, I thought once they wou'd have it.

Milla. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing I swear, that one has not the liberty of chusing ones acquaintance as one does ones cloaths.

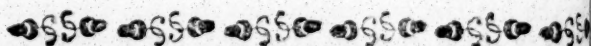
Mrs. Mar. If we had that liberty, we shou'd be as weary of one set of acquaintance, tho' never so good, as we are of one suit, tho' never so fine. A Fool and a doily stuff wou'd now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Milla. I could consent to wear 'em, if they wou'd wear alike; but Fools never wear out—They are such *Drap-de-berry* things! Without one cou'd give 'em to ones Chamber-maid after a day or two.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the Play-house? A fine gay glossy Fool shou'd be given there, like a new masking habit, after the

Masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a Fools visit is always a disguise, & never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a Lover of sense. If you would but appear bare now, and own *Mirabell*, you might as easily put on *Petulant* and *Witwound*, as your hood and scarf. Indeed 'tis time, for the Town has found it: the secret is grown too big for the pretence. 'Tis like *Primlys* great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, *Millamant*, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady *Strammel* can her face, that goodly face, which in defiance of her Rheum wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Milla. I'll take my death, *Marwood*, you are more censorious than a decay'd Beauty. or a discarded Title. *Mincing*, tell the Men they may come up: My house is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice.



SCENE XI.

Millamant, Marwood.

Millamant.

THE Town has found it! What has it found? *Mirabell* loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discover'd it to my Aunt, or than it is a reason why you discover'd it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettl'd.

Milla. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another Fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Milla. O silly! Ha, ha, ha, I cou'd laugh immoderately. Poor *Mirabell*! His constancy to me has destroy'd his complaisance for all the world besides.

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swear, I never enjoin'd it him, to be so coy — If I had the vanity to think he wou'd obey me I wou'd command him to shew more gallantry — 'Tis hardly well bred to be so particular on one hand, and so sensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha, ha, ha! Pardon me, dear Creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha, tho' I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis so much fine railery, and deliver'd with so significant gesture, thou'd be so unhappily directed to miscarry.

Milla. Hæ! Dear creature I ask your pardon — I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think it thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you —

Milla. O dear, what? for it is the same thing, if I hear it — Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, Madam.

Milla. O Madam, why so do I — And yet the Creature loves me, ha, ha, ha. How can one forbear laughing to think of it — I am a Sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer — and within a year or two as young — If you cou'd but stay for me, I shou'd overtake you — But that cannot be — Well, that thought makes me melancholick Now I'll be sad.

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be chang'd sooner than you think.

Milla. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolv'd I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

SCENE XII.

[To them] Mincing.

Mincing.

THE Gentlemen stay but to comb, Madam;
I will wait on you.

Milla. Desire Mrs.—that is in the next room to
the song I would have learnt yester-day. You shall
it, Madam—Not that there's any great matter in
But 'tis agreeable to my humour.

S O N G.

Set by Mr. John Eccles.

I.

LOVE's but the frailty of the Mind,
When 'tis not with Ambition join'd;
A sickly flame, which if not fed expires;
And feeding, wastes in self consuming fires.

I I.

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy
Or am'rous Youth, that gives the joy;
But 'tis the glory to have pierc'd a Swain;
For whom inferior beauties sigh'd in vain.

I I I.

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a Rivals eyes:

There's delight in Love, 'tis when I see
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.



SCENE XIII.

[To them] Petulant, Witwoud.

Millamant.

Is your animosity compos'd, Gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, Raillery, Madam, we have no animosity — We hit off a little wit now and then but animosity — The falling out of Wits is like the falling out of Lovers — We agree in the main, like treble and Me. Ha, *Petulant!*

Pet. Ay in the main — But when I have a humour contradict —

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another, like two battledores; for contradictions beget one another like *Jews*.

Pet. If he says black's black. . . If I have a humour to say 'tis blue. . . Let that pass. . . All's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must. . . But it may. . . It may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must. upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, Madam.

Mrs Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. *Petulant's* an enemy to learning; he relies together on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs

Mrs. Mar. That's a sign indeed it's no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, it's no enemy to any body, but to those that have it.

Milla. Well, an illiterate Man's my aversion: I wonder at the impudence of any illiterate Man, to offer to marry a Lady for love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Milla. Ah! to marry an ignorant! that can neither read or write.

Pet. Why should a Man be any further from being married than he is from being hanged? The Ordinary's paid for setting the *Psalms*, and the Priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest, it is to follow in both cases, a Man may do it with a book... So all's one for that.

Milla. D'ye hear the creature? Lord, here's come a fellow that I'll be gone.



S C E N E X I X.

Sir Willfull Witwoud in a riding dress.
Mrs. Marwood, Petulant, Witwoud's
Footman.

Witwoud.

IN the Name of *Bartlemew* and his fair, what business have we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your Brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I.... Yes, I think it is he.... I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

Foot. Sir, my Lady's dressing. Here's company. You please to walk in, in the mean time.

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Foot. Your Aunt, Sir?

Foot. A Week, Sir; longer than any body in the house,
except my Ladys Woman.

Foot. Why truly Sir, I cannot safely swear to her
in a morning, before she is dress'd. 'Tis like I may
be a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Foot. I shall, Sir.

Foot. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come so many
ere, 'tis hard to know 'em all.

S C E N E X V.

Sir Wilfull Witwoud, Petulant, Witwoud, Mrs. Marwood.

Sir: *Wilfull.*

Ons this fellow knows less than a starling; I don't think a'knows his own name.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Mar. Mr. *Witwoud*, your Brother is not behind hand in forgetfulness — I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so---The Devil take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you Gentlemen and Lady.

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. *Witwoud*; why won't you speak to him?---And you, Sir.

Wit. *Petulant* speak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope.

[Salutes Marwood]

Mrs. Mar. No sure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence, ha, ha, ha; to him, to him, *Petulant*, smother him.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, Sir; he smothered him.

[Surveying him round]

Sir Wil. Very likely, Sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, Sir?

Sir Wil. May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant.

Wit. Smother the boots, the boots; *Petulant*, the boots, ha, ha, ha.

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: if you are satisfied with the information of my boots, Sir, if you will step to the stable, you may enquire further of your horse, Sir.

Pet. Your horse, Sir! Your horse is an ass, Sir.

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, Sir?

Mrs. Mar. The Gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir. 'S'life, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and an ass, before they find one another out. You must not say anything amiss from your friends, Sir. You are among your friends, here, tho' it may be you don't know it. If I am not mistaken, you are Sir *Witfull Witwoud*.

Sir Wil. Right Lady; I am Sir *Witfull Witwoud*, I write my self; no offence to any body, I hope; I am nephew to the Lady *Wishfort* of this mansion.

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this Gentleman, Sir?

Sir Wil. but 'tis--- but 'tis, b What do thou art I do 'st not f Wit. O Sir Wil. vant again And a---(And a har an you be Wit. N Sir Wil. Apox, is your friend betters? Wit. W Short as a S 'tis not mo you're in th ber and kiss eants---'T brother. Sir Wil. brother. 's spectur'd you file of your the edges, r when you le in good healt Knight, I'm and then tel whore and a news before with honest You cou'd in round the Re

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Sir Wil. Hum! What, sure 'tis not---Yea by'r Lady,
 'tis---'Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no---Yea
 'tis, by the *Rekin*. Brother *Antony*! What *Tony*, i'faith!
 What do'st thou not know me? By'r Lady nor I thee,
 thou art so becravated, and so bepperriwig'd---'Sheart why
 o'st not speak? Art thou o'erjoy'd?

Wit. Odso brother, is it you? Your Servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your Servant! Why yours, Sir. Your ser-
 vant again---'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that--
 And a---(*puff*) and a flap dragon for your service, Sir:
 And a hares foot, and a hares scut for your service, Sir;
 in you be so cold and so courtly!

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother?

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much offence---
 Apox, is this your Inns o' Court breeding, not to know
 your friends and your relations, your elders, and your
 betters?

Wit. Why, brother *Wilfull* of *Salop*, you may be as
 short as a *Shrewsbury* cake, if you please. But I tell you
 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think
 you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slab-
 ber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of Ser-
 vants---'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear
 brother.

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool; and you're a Fop, dear
 brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this---By'r Lady I con-
 fectur'd you were a Fop, since you began to change the
 file of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round
 the edges, no bigger than a *Subpana*. I might expect this
 when you left off Honour'd brother; and hoping you are
 in good health, and so forth---to begin with a, Rat me,
 Knight, I'm so sick of a last nights debauch---O'ds heart,
 and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a
 whore and a bottle, and so conclude---You cou'd write
 news before you were out of your time, when you liv'd
 with honest *Purple-Nose* the Attorney of *Furnivals* Inn---
 You cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your friends
 round the *Rekin*. We could have gazettes then, and *Dawk's*
 E letter,

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letter, and the weekly Bill, 'till of late days.

Pet. Slife, *Witwoud*, were you ever an Attorneys Clerk
Of the family of the *Furnivals*. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long
not long. Pshaw, I was not in my own power then: I was
orphan, and this fellow was my guardian: ay, ay, I was
glad to consent to that man to come to *London*. He had
the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that,
might have been bound prentice to a felt-maker in *Shrewsbury*;
bury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker
felts.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker
offops; where, I suppose, you have serv'd your time
and now you may set up for your self.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to go
upon the salt Seas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I shan't ask license of
Sir; nor of the weather-cock your companion. I direct
discourse to the Lady, Sir; 'tis like my aunt may have
told you, Madam---Yes, I have settl'd my conceits
may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts: I
how that the peace holds, whereby that is taxes abate
Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for *France*
adventures.

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like
may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution
---because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand
shall I, then; if I say't, I'll do't: But I have thought
to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of
Lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a
of your *French* as they say, whereby to hold discourse
foreign countries.

Mrs. Mar. Here's an Academy in town for that.

Sir Wil. There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much
prov'd.

Wit. Yes refin'd like a Dutch Skipper from a whale
thing.



S C E N E X V I.

[To them] Lady Wishfort and Fainall.

Lady.

Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilfull, your most faithful Servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

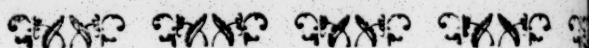
Lady. Cousin Witwoud, your servant; Mr. Petulant;
your servant---Nephew, you are welcome again. Will
you drink any thing after your journey, Nephew, before
you eat? Dinner's almost ready.

Sir Wil. I'm very well I thank you, aunt---However,
thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart I was afraid
you wou'd have been in the fashion too, and have remem-
ber'd to have forgot your relations. Here's your Cousin
Tony, belike I maynt call him brother for fear of offence.

Lady. O he's a rallier, Nephew---My Cousin's a Wit:
And your great Wits always rally their best friends to
chuse. When you have been abroad, Nephew, you'll
understand raillery better.

[Fain. and Mrs. Marwood talk apart.]

Sir Wil. Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean
time; and rail when that day comes.



S C E N E X V I I.

[To them] Mincing.

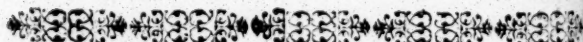
Mincing.

MEm, I come to acquaint your Laship that dinner is impatient.

Sir *Wil.* Impatient! Why then belike it won't stay. I pull off my boots. Sweet-heart, can you help me a pair of slippers?---My Man's with his horses, I warrant.

Lady. Fie, fie, Nephew, you wou'd not put your boots here---Go down into the hall---Dinner stay for you---My Nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, Madam,---Gentlemen will you walk? *Maria*

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, Madam,---Before Sir *Fainall* is ready.



S C E N E X V I I I.

Marwood, Fainall.

Fainall.

WHy then *Foible's* a bawd, an errant, rank making bawd. And I it seems am a husband, a rank-husband; and my Wife a very errant, rank-woman, all in the way of the world. 'Sdeath to be a cuckold in anticipation, a cuckold in embrio! Sure I was born with budding antlers like a young Satyr, or a citizen

Death to be out-witted, to be out-jilted---out-matrimonied,---It I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat,---but to crawl after, with my horns like a snail, and be out-stripp'd by my wife---'tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off; you have often wish'd for an opportunity to part,---and now you have it. But will prevent their plot,---the half of *Millamant's* fortune too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to *Millamant*.

Fain. Damn him, that had been mine--had you not made that fond discovery---That had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns, by that increase of fortune, I could have worn a tipt with gold, tho' my forehead had been furnish'd like a Deputy-Lieutenants Hall.

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her---I dare swear she had given up her game, before she was marry'd,

Fain. Hum! That may be ---

Mrs. Mar. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means?

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my Lady your Wifes conduct; threaten to part with her----My Lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My Lady will be enrag'd beyond bounds, and sacrifice Neice, and fortune, and all at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm, if she shou'd flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith this has an appearance.

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my Lady to en-
deavour a match between *Millamant* and Sir *Wilfull*; that
may be an obstacle.

Fain. O for that matter, leave me to manage him. I'll disable him for that, he will drink like a Dane after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your Lady?

Fain. Why faith I'm thinking of it.---Let me see---I am marry'd already; so that's over---My wife has plaid the jade with me---Well, that's over too---I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that wou'd have been over too by this time---Jealous of her I cannot be for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy. Wary of her, I am and shall be---No, there's no end of that. No, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation.---As for my own, I marry'd not for it; so that's out of the question---And as to my part in my wifes---Why she has parted with hers before; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me; 'tis against all rule of play, that I should lose to one, who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs. Mar. Besides you forget, marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum! Faith and that's well thought on; marriage is honourable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should Cuckoldom be a discredit, being deriv'd from so honourable a root?

Mrs. Mar. Nay I know not; if the root be honourable, why not the branches?

Fain. So, so, why this point's clear.---Well, how do we proceed?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be deliver'd to my Lady at the time when that Rascal who is act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand---for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides you wou'd not have *Foible* provok'd if I could help it---because you know she knows some passages---Nay I expect all will come out---But let the mine be sprung first, then I care not if I am discover'd.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst---I'll turn

wife to g
best part o
that you h

Mrs. Mar.

now: Y

Fain.

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Foib. Ye
stances; an

wife to grafs---I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her Estate; which I wheadl'd out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinc'd that I hate *Mirabell* now: You'll be no more jealous?

Fain. Jealous, no,---by this kiss---let Husbands be jealous; but let the Lover still believe: or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his Mistress true. But let Husbands doubts convert to endless jealousy; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest.

*All Husbands must, or pain, or shame, endure;
The wife too jealous are, fools too secure.*



A C T. IV.

S C E N E I.

[S C E N E continues.]

Lady Wishfort and Foible.

Lady.

Is Sir Rowland coming say'st thou, *Foible*? and are things in order?

Foib. Yes, Madam. I have put wax-lights in the sconces; and plac'd the Footmen in a row in the hall, in their

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their best liveries, with the Coachman and Postilion fill up the equipage.

Lady. Have you pulvill'd the Coachman and Postilion that they may not stink of the stable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, Madam.

Lady. And are the dancers and the musick ready, that he may be entertain'd in all points with correspondance to his passion.

Foib. All is ready, Madam.

Lady. And---well---and how do I look, *Foible*?

Foib. Most killing well, Madam.

Lady. Well, and how shall I receive him? In what figure shall I give his heart the first impression. Shall I sit?---No, I won't sit---I'll walk---ay I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him---No, that will be too sudden. I'll lye---ay, I'll lye down---I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a couch---Yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on the couch---I won't lye neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow; with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtfull way--Yes---and then as soon as he appears start, ay, start and be surpriz'd, and rise to meet him---a pretty disorder---Yes---O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion---It shows the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and composing airs beyond comparison. Hark! There's the coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady. O dear, has my Nephew made his address to *Millamant*? I order'd him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking, Madam, in the parlour.

Lady. Ods my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down *Foible*; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go---When they are together, then come to me *Foible*, that I may not be so long alone with Sir Rowland.]

SCENE

S C E N E I I.

Mrs. Millamant, Mrs. Fainall, Foible.

Foible.

M^r Adam, I stay'd here, to tell your Ladiship that Mr. *Mirabell* has waited this half hour for an opportunity to talk with you. Tho' my Ladys orders were to leave you and Sir *Wilfull* together. Shall I tell Mr. *Mirabell* that you are at leisure?

Milla. No—What wou'd the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and wou'd amuse my self, ---bid him come another time.

*There never yet was Woman made,
Nor shall, but to be curs'd.* [Repeating and walking about.
That's hard!

Mrs. Fain. You are very fond of Sir *John Suckling* to say, *Millamant*, and the Poets.

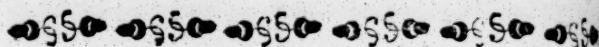
Milla. He; Ay, and filthy verses — so I am.

Foib. Sir *Wilfull* is coming, Madam. Shall I send Mr. *Mirabell* away?

Milla. Ay, if you please, *Foible*, send him away, — Or send him hither, — just as you will, dear *Foible*. — I think I'll see him — Shall I? Ay let the wretch come.

Thyrsis, a Youth of the inspired Train. [Repeating.
Dear *Fainall*, entertain Sir *Wilfull* — Thou hast Philosophy to undergo a Fool, thou art marry'd and hast patience — I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. Fain. I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.



S C E N E I I.

(To Them) Sir Wilfull.

Mrs. Fain all

O Sir Wilfull; you are come at the critical instant
There's your Mistress up to the ears in Love and
Contemplation, pursue your point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my Aunt will have it so, — I've
gladly have been encourag'd with a Bottle or two
because I'm somewhat wary at first, } *This while M*
before I am acquainted: — But I hope, } *walks about*
after a time, I shall break my mind } *peating to her*
— that is upon further acquaintance — So for the
sent, Cousin, I'll take my leave --- If so be you'll be
kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my com-
ny ---

Mrs. Fain. O fie, Sir Wilfull! What, you
not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not
much for that --- for if so be that I set on't, I'll
But only for the present, 'tis sufficient 'till further
acquaintance, that's all --- your Servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose
favourable an opportunity, if I can help it; I'll
you together, and lock the door.

THE
NAY, wh
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Milla. [re
I prithee f
Pret's me
Sir Wil.
Milla. ---

Sir Wil. Y
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Milla. Ah
Sir Wil.
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Milla. Hav
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S C E N E I V.

Sir Wilfull, Millamant.

Sir. Wilfull.

NAY, nay Cousin, --- I have forgot my gloves,
--- what d'ye do? 'Sheart a' has lock'd the door
deed, I think --- Nay, Cousin *Fainall*, open the door
--- Phaw, what a vixon trick is this? --- Nay,
ow a' has seen me too --- Cousin, I made bold to pass
as it were --- I think this door's enchanted ---

Milla. [repeating.]

*I prithee spare me, gentle Boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.*

Sir Wil. Anan Cousin, your Servant.

Milla. --- That foolish trifle of a Heart --- Sir Wil-

Sir Wil. Yes --- your Servant. No offence I hope,

Milla. [Repeating.]

*I swear it will not do its part,
Thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.
Natural, easie Suckling!*

*Sir Wil. Anan? Suckling? No such Suckling neither,
Cousin, nor Stripling: I thank Heav'n, I'm no Mi-*

Milla. Ah Rustick, ruder than Gothick.

*Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your
one of these days, Cousin, in the mean while
must answer in plain English.*

Milla. Have you any business with me Sir Wilfull?

*Sir Wil. Not at present, Cousin, --- Yes, I make
bold*

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bold to see, to come and know if that how you were dispos'd to fetch a walk this evening; if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have fought a walk with you.

Milla. A walk? what then?

Sir Wil. Nay nothing—Only for the walks sake that's all—

Milla I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loath the country and every thing that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! hah! Look ye, look ye, you do Nay, 'tislike you may --- Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as Plays and the like, that must be confessed indeed.---

Milla. Ah l'etourdi! I hate the Town too.

Sir Wil. Dear, that's much -- Hah! that you should hate'em both! Hah! 'tis like you may; there are few can't relish the Town, and others can't away with the country, --'tis like you may be one of those, Cousin.

Milla. Ha, ha, ha. Yes, 'tis like I may.... You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, Cousin. --- 'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private, -- I may break my mind in some measure -- I conjecture you partly guess --- However that's as time shall try, --- But spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

Milla. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wil. you will oblige me to leave me: I have just now a little business. ---

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, Cousin: Yes, yes, I am in a case --- When you're dispos'd, when you're dispos'd. Now's as well as another time, and another time as well as now, all's one for that, -- Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold as the day --- Cousin, your Servant. --- I think this door lock'd.

Milla. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir Wil. Your Servant, then with your leave I'll turn to my company.

Milla. Ay, ay, ha, ha, ha.

Phœbus sung the no less am'rous Boy.



S C E N E I I.

Millamant, Mirabell.

Mirabell.

Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.

Do you lock your self up from me, to make my search more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contriv'd, to signify that heretoe chace must end, and my pursuit be crown'd, for you can fly no further? —

Milla. Vanity! No---I'll fly and be follow'd to the last moment, tho I am upon the very verge of matrimony; I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a Monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the last?

Milla. O, I should think I was poor and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduc'd to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mira. But do not you know, that when favours are conferr'd upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value; and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

Milla. It may be in things of common application; but never sure in Love. O, I hate a Lover, independent on the bounty of his Mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the sawcy look of an assured Man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very Husband, has not so pragmatical an Air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mira. Would you have 'em both before marriage? or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for

for the toher 'till after grace?

Milla. Ah! don't be impertinent — My dear Liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? ay-h — my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*, adieu! I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible — Positively *Mirabell*, I'll lye a bed in a morning as long as I please.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as you please.

Milla. Ah! Idle creature, get up when you will. And d'ye hear, I won't be call'd names after I'm married; positively I won't be call'd names.

Mira. Names!

Milla. Ay, as Wife, Spouse, My dear, joy, jewel, love, sweet-heart, and the rest of that nauseous catalogue, in which men and their wives are so fulsomly familiar, ... I shall never bear that ... Good *Mirabell* don't let me be familiar, or fond, nor kits before folks, like *Lady Fidler* and *Sir Francis*: Nor go to *Hide-Parade* together the first *Sunday*, in a new chariot, to promote eyes and whispers; and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after: Let us not visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well bred as if we were not married at all.

Mira. Have you any more conditions to offer? I'll shew therto your demands are pretty reasonable,

Milla. Trifles, ... As liberty to pay and receive what fits, to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on my part; to wear what I please; and chuse conversation with regard only to my own taste: to have no obligation upon me to converse with Wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations: to go to dinner when I please, dine in my Dressing-Room

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when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. I have my Tea table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, where ever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees windle into a wife.

Mira. Your Bill of fare is something advanc'd in this latter account; Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarg'd into a husband?

Milla. You have free leave, propose your utmost, speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidant, or intimate of your own sex; no she friend to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecie. No decoy-trick to wheedle you a *Fop* scrambling to the Play, in a mask—Then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—And rail at me for missing the Play, and disappointing the frolik which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

Milla. Detestable *Imprimis*! I go to the Play in a mask!

Mira. *Item*, I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall: And while it passës current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oil'd skins and know not what—hogs bones, hares gall, pig water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in *what d'ye call it*

Court. *Item*, I shut my doors against all bawws with wickets, and penny-worths of *Muslin*, *China*, *Fans*, *Attaches*, &c. — *Item*, when you shall be breeding—

Milla Ah! Name it not.

Mira. Which may be presum'd, with a blessing on
ur

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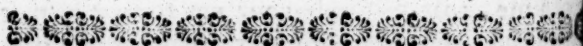
our endeavours.

Milla. Odious endeavours!

Mira. I denounce against all strait lacing, squeezing for a shape, 'till you mould my boys head like a Turkey-loaf, and instead of a man-child, make me father a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the Tea-table I submit... But with *proviso*, that you exceed not your province; but restrain your self to native and simple Tea-table drinks, as Tea, Chocolate, & Coffee. As likewise to genuine & authoriz'd Tea-table talk.. Such as mentions of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends and so forth... But that on no account you encroach upon the mens prerogative, and presume to drink health or toast fellows, for prevention of which, I banish Foreign Forces, all auxiliaries to the Tea-table as Orange Brandy, all Anniseed, Cinamon, Citron and Barbadoe Waters, together with Ratafia, and the most noble spirit of Clary — But for Coustip Wine, Poppy-Waters, all Dormitives, those I allow. — These *Provisos* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Milla. O horrid *Provisos*! filthy strong waters toast fellows, odious Men! I hate your odious *Provisos*.

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand to the contract? and here comes one to be a witness to the deed.



SCENE VI.

[To them] Mrs. Fainall.

Millamant.

Fainall, what shall I do? Shall I have him? I must have him.

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Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him, what should you do?

Milla. Well then — I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright — *Fainall*, I shall never say it — Well — I think — I'll endure you.

Mrs. Fain. Fy, fy, have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms: For I am sure you have a mind to him.

Milla. Are you, I think I have — and the horrid man looks as if he thought so to — Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you — I won't be kiss'd, nor I won't be thank'd — Here kiss my hand tho' — So, hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

Mrs. Fain. *Mirabell*, there's a necessity for your obedience; ... you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming; and in my conscience if she shou'd see you wou'd fall into fits, and may be not recover, time enough to return to *Sir Rowland*; who, as *Foible* tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your extacies for another occasion, and slip down the back stairs where, *Foible* waits to consult you.

Milla. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I suppose you have said something to please me.

Mira. I am all obedience.

SCENE VII.

Millamant, *Mrs. Fainall*.

Mrs. Fainall.

Yonder *Sir Wilfull*'s drunk; and so noisic that my Mother has been forc'd to leave *Sir Rowland* to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking ... What they may have done by this time I know not; but *Petulant* and he were upon quarrelling when I came by.

F

Milla

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Milla. Well, if *Mirabell* should not make a good husband; I am a lost thing; ... for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what I said to you... If you doubt him, you had best take up with Sir *Wilfull*.

Milla. How can you name that superannuated Lecher? foh!



SCENE VIII.

(*To them*) *Witwoud from drinking.*

Mrs. Fainall.

SO, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em? *Wit.* Left 'em! I could stay no longer... I have laugh'd like ten Christnings... I am tipsie with laughing. If I had staid any longer I should have burst, ... I should have been let out and piec'd in the sides like an unicorn's camlet... Yes, yes, the fray is compos'd; my Lady came in like a *Noli prosequi*, and stopt the proceeding.

Milla. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage; and so fell a t'ring at one another like two roasting apples.

Now begin to speak? the Per. Lo me, dear pus on, Wit. Th decimo sex- tant, thou Pet. Wi Wit. T in remnant thou art in of short ha Pet. Th sis, and Ba A Gemini o Wit. Th me for that Pet. Star Wit's d your 2 will be (hic Milla. E Pet. The quarrel. Wit. If t have expres the ears like

SCENE IX.

(To them) *Petulant drunk.*

Witwoud.

NOW *Petulant* ? all's over, all's well ? Gad my head begins to whim it about... Why dost thou not speak ? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, *Mrs. Millamant*... if you can love me, dear Nymph... say it... and that's the conclusion... pass on, or pass off,... that's all.

Wit. Thou hast utter'd volumes, *Folios*, in less than decimo sexto, my dear *Lacedemonian*. Sirrah, *Petulant*, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. *Witwoud*... You are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pin-cushions... thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an this, and *Baldwin* yonder, thy half brother, is the rest... & *Gemini* of asses split, would make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off... I'll kiss no more males,... I have kiss'd your *Twin* yonder in a humour of reconciliation, till he (*hiccup*) rises upon my stomach like a radish.

Milla. Eh! filthy creature... what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel... there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have express'd provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

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Pet. You were the quarrel.

Milla. Me!

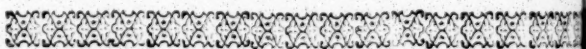
Pet. If I have humour to quarrel, I can make matters conclude premises.. If you are not handier what then; if I have a humour to prove it? If I have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face next time your self.. I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thy felt up like a woodlouse, and dream revenge.. And hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge.. I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your Mistress's *menkey* a spider, ... go to dogs, and read romances.. I'll go to bed to my maid.

Mrs. Fain. He's horridly drunk... how came you in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the Knight... I'll follow his husband's advice; but he sneak'd off.



S C E N E X.

Sir Wilfull drunk, Lady Wishfort, Millamant, Mrs. Fainall.

Lady.

Out upon't! out upon't! at years of discretion comport your self at this rantipole rate!

Sir Wil. No offence, Aunt.

Lady. Offence! As I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you! Fogh! how you stink of wine! d'ye think my Niece ever endure such a *Borachio*? you're an absolute *Borachio*!

Sir Wil. *Borachio*!

Lady. At a time when you shou'd commend your self to your own honour, and put your best foot foremost...

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, an you grutch me your liquor...

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Give me more drink, and take my purse.

*Prithee fill me the glass
'Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a lass
Is an ignorant ass,
For a bumper has not its fellow.*

But if you wou'd have me marry my Cousin, ... say the word, and I'll do't... *Wilfull* will do't, that's the word... *Wilfull* will do't, that's my crest... my motto I have forgot.

Lady. My Nephew's a little overtaken, Cousin, ... but 'tis with drinking your health... O' my word you are oblig'd to him...

Sir Wil. *In vino veritas*, Aunt: ... If I drunk your health to-day, Cousin; I am a *Borachio*. But if you have mind to be marry'd, say the word and send for the Piper; *Wilfull* will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round... *Tony's* an honest fellow, but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault,

Sings. *We'll drink and we'll never ha' done boys,
Put the glass then around with the Sun boys,
Let Apollos example invite us;
For he's drunk ev'ry night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.*

The Sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker, he has a Cellar at your *Antipodes*. If I travel, Aunt, I touch at your *Antipodes*... your *Antipodes* are a good rascally sort of topick turvy fellows... If I had a bumper I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to 'em... A match or no match, Cousin, with the hard name... Aunt, *Wilfull* will do't. If she has her maidenhead let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the mean time, and cry out at the nine months end.

Milla. Your pardon, Madam, I can stay no longer.
Sir VViltfull grows very powerful. Egh! how he smelt
 I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, Cousin.



S C E N E X I.

Lady Wishfort, Sir Willfull Witwoud
Mr. Witwoud, Foible.

Lady.

S Mells! he would poison a Tallow-chandler and
 family. Beastly creature, I know not what to
 with him.... Travel quoth a; ay travel, travel,
 thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the *Saracens*,
 the *Tartars*, or the *Turks*... for thou art not fit to live
 Christian Common-wealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir VVil. *Turks*, no; no *Turks*, Aunt: your *Turks*
 infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your *Mahometan*
 your *Mussulman* is a dry stinkard... No offence, Aunt.
 My map says that your *Turk* is not so honest a man as
 Christian... I cannot find by the map that your *Mahometan*
 orthodox... whereby it is a plain case that orthodox
 hard word., Aunt, and (*hiccup*) Greek for claret.

Sings. *To drink is a Christian diversion,*
Unnown to the Turk or the Persian:

Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And be damn'd over Tea cups and coffee.
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the King,
And a fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

Ah! Tony!

[*Foible whispers Lady Wishfort*]

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Lady. Sir Rowland impatient? good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbrel?... Gollie down and sleep, you Sot... or as I'm a Person, I'll have you bastinado'd with broom sticks. Call up the Wenches with broomsticks.

Sir Mil. Ahey! Wenches, where are the Wenches?

Lady. Dear Cousin Mitwoud get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation. You will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, Knight... Pox on him, I don't know what to say to him... Will you go to a Cock-match?

Sir Wil. With a wench, Tony? Is she a shake-bag, Sirrah? Let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! He has a breath like a bagpipe... Ay, come will you march, my Salopian?

Sir Vvil. Lead on, little Tony... I'll follow thee my Anthony, my Tantony: Sirrah thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy Pig.

...And a fig for your Sultan and Sophy.

Lady. This will never do. It will never make a match... At least before he has been abroad.

SCENE II.

Lady Wishfort, Waitwell *disguis'd as for*
Sir Rowland.

Lady.

DEAR Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness. ... I have more pardons to ask than the Pope distributes in
F 4 the

the year of Jubile. But I hope where there is like to be so near an alliance, ... we may unbend the verity of *Decorum* ... and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, Madam, is the effect of transport; ... and 'till I have the possession of your noble person, I am tantaliz'd on the rack; and do hang, Madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady. You have excess of Gallantry, Sir Rowland, press things to a conclusion, with a most prevailing vehemence. ... But a day or two for decency of marriage ...

Wait. For decency of funeral, Madam. The will break my heart ... or if that should fail, I shall be poison'd. My Nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me, ... and I would willingly find him before I die ... I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction. ... That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be reveng'd on that unnatural viper.

Lady. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I will contribute much both to the saving of your life; and the accomplishment of your revenge. ... Not that I revenge my self: tho' he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has dy'd at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the tremblings, the ardors and the ecstasies, the kneelings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetick regards of his protesting eyes, oh no memory can register.

Wait. What my rival! Is the rebel my rival?

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be bare in a month out at knees with begging an alms, ... he shall starve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle upon a save-all.

Lady. Well, Sir *Rowland*, you have the way... You are no novice in the labyrinth of love... You have the way... But as I am a person, Sir *Rowland*, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or inclination of widow-hood, nor impute my complacency to a lethargy of continence... I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials.

Wait. Far be it from me...

Lady. If you do, I protest I must recede... or think I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the remembrance of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance...

Wait. I esteem it so...

Lady. Or else you wrong my condescension...

Wait. I do not, I do not...

Lady. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue.

Lady. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient...

Wait. Dear Madam, no. You are all *Camphire* and *sunkincense*, all *chastity* and *odour*.

Lady. Or that...

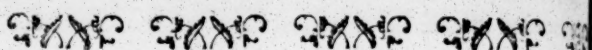
S C E N E X I I I.

[*To them*] *Foible*.

Foible.

*M*adam, the dancers are ready; and there's one with a Letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

Lady. Sir *Rowland*, will you give me leave? think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honours cause, for Sir *Rowland*, and will wait on you incessantly.



SCENE XIV.

Waitwell, Foible.

Waitwell.

FIE, fie ! ... What a slavery have I undergone
Spouse, hast thou any *Cordial*? I want *Spirits*.

Foib. What a washy Rogue art thou, to pant
for a quarter of an hours lying and swearing to a
Lady?

Wait. O, she is the antidote to desire. Spouse, to
wilt fare the worse for't ... I shall have no appe
to iteration of nuptials ... this eight and forty hours
By this hand I'd rather be a chair-man in the
days ... than act Sir *Rowland* 'till this time to-morrow.



SCENE XV.

[*To them*] Lady with a Letter.

Lady.

CALL in the dancers ; ... Sir *Rowland* ; we
if you please and see the Entertainment.

Now with your permission , Sir *Rowland*, I
peruse my Letter ... I would open it in your presence
because I would not make you uneasy. If it should
make you uneasy, I would burn it ... speak if it does
but you may see, the superscription is like a Woman's
hand.

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Foib. By Heav'n! Mrs. Marwood, I know it, ...
my heart akes ... get it from her ... [*To him.*

Wait. A Womans hand! No, Madam, that's no
Womans hand, I see that already. That's some body
whose throat must be cut.

Lady. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a
proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise
you I'll make a return, by a frank communication ...
You shall see it ... we'll open it together ... look you
here.

Reads. ... Madam, though unknown to you, [look
you there, 'tis from no body that I know.] — I have
that honour for your character, that I think my self oblig'd
to let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be Sir
Rowland is a cheat and a rascal...

Oh heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate, all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how, let me see, let me see... reading,
A rascal and disguis'd, and suborn'd for that imposture, ...
O villany! O villany! ... by the contrivance of...

Lady. I shall faint, I shall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your Nephews hand... Quickly, his
plot, swear, swear it... [*To him.*

Wait. Here's a villain! Madam, don't you perceive
it, don't you see it?

Lady. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand... A Womans
hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand, your Ro-
man hand... I saw there was a throat to be cut presently.
If he were my Son, as he is my Nephew, I'd pistol him...

Foib. O treachery! But are you sure, Sir Rowland,
it is his writing?

Wait. Sure? Am I here? do I live? do I love this
pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from
him, in the same character.

Lady. How!

Foib. O what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were
present at this juncture! This was the business that
brought

brought Mr. *Mirabell* disguis'd to Madam *Millam* this afternoon. I thought something was contriv'd when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

Lady. How, how!... I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember, my Neice went away abruptly, when Sir *Wilfull* was to have made addresses.

Foib. Then, then Madam, Mr. *Mirabell* waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your Lady to discompose you when you were to receive Sir *Rowland*.

Wait. Enough, his date is short.

Foib. No, good Sir *Rowland*, don't incur the Law.

Wait. Law! I care not for Law. I can but die, 'tis in a good cause... My Lady shall be satisfy'd of my truth and innocence, tho' it cost me my life.

Lady. No, dear Sir *Rowland*, don't fight, if you should be kill'd I must never shew my face: or hang on to consider my reputation, Sir *Rowland*... No you must fight, ... I'll go in and examine my Neice; I'll make her confess. I conjure you Sir *Rowland* by all your love to fight.

Wait. I am charm'd Madam, I obey. But sometimes you must let me give you; ... I'll go for a black box which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady. Ay dear Sir *Rowland*, that will be some comfort; bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract sign'd this night? May I hope so far?

Lady. Bring what you will, but come alive, come alive. O this is a happy discovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come... and married we shall be in spite of treachery; ay and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned

Nephew. Come, my buxom Widow:

E're long you shall substantial proof receive

That I'm an arrant knight...

Foib. Or arrant knave.



A C T. V.

S C E N E [*Continues*]

Lady Wishfort and Foible.

Lady.

OUT of my house , out of my house , thou
Viper , thou *Serpent* , that I have foster'd ; thou
 bosom traitress , that I rais'd from nothing . . . Begone,
 begone, begone, go, go,... That I took from washing
 of old gaule and weaving of dead hair , with a bleak blue
 nose, over a chafing-dish of starv'd embers , and dining
 behind a travers rag , in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage...
 go, go , starve again , do, do.

Foib. Dear Madam , I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady. Away , out , out , go set up for your self again,...
 do, drive a trade , do , with your three-penny-worth
 of small ware , flaunting upon a packthread , under a
 brandy-sellers bulk , or against a dead wall by a ballad-
 monger. Go , hang out an old *Frisoneer-gorget* , with a
 yard of yellow *Colberticen* again ; do ; an old gnaw'd
 mask , two rows of pins and a child's fiddle ; a glass
 necklace with the beads broken , and a quilted nightcap
 with one ear. Go , go , drive a trade ,... These were
 your commodities , you treacherous trull , this was the
 merchandize you dealt in , when I took you into my
 house , plac'd you next my self , and made you gover-
 nante of my whole family. You have forgot this , have
 you , now you have feather'd your nest ?

Foib. No , no dear Madam. Do but hear me , have
 but a moments patience . . . I'll confess all. *Mr. Mirabell*
 se2

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seduc'd me; I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue; your Ladiships own wisdom has been deluded by him, then how should a poor ignorant, defend my self? O Madam, if you knew but what he promis'd me, and how he assur'd me your Ladiship should come to no damage... Or else the wealth of the *Indies* should not have brib'd me to confide against so good, so sweet, so kind a Lady as you have been to me.

Lady. No damage! what to betray me, to marry me to a cast serving Man; to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decay'd pimp? No damage? O thou fronted impudence, more than a big-belly'd Actress.

Foib. Pray do but hear me Madam, he could not marry your Ladiship, Madam... No indeed his marriage was to have been void in Law; for was marry'd to me first to secure your Ladiship. He could not have bedded your Ladiship; for if he had consummated with your Ladiship, he must have run the risque of the Law, and been hang'd upon his Clergy... Yes indeed, I enquir'd of the Law in that case before I would meddle or make.

Lady. What, then I have been your property, I have been convenient to you, it seems,... while we were catering for *Mirabell*; I have been brooker for you. What, have you made a passive Bawd of me?... exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to be a botcher of second-hand marriages, between *Alphonsus* and *Andrews*! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baffle you together, you and your *Philander*. I'll *Dukes-Plate* you as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already, shall coo in the same cage, if there be a Constable or a rant in the Parish.

Foib. O that ever I was born, o that I was ever marry'd... a Bride, ay I shall be a *Bridewell*-bride. Oh!

SCENE II.

Mrs. Fainall, Foible.

Mrs. Fainall

POOR Foible, what's the matter?

Foib. O Madam, my Lady's gone for a Constable
shall be had to a Justice, and put to Bridewell to bear
pen; poor Waitwells gone to prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good heart, Foible, Mirabell's
gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's
and my husbands doing.

Foib. Yes, yes; I know it, Madam; she was in my
Ladys closet, and over heard all that you said to me
before dinner. She sent the letter to my Lady; and
that misling effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest
Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers;
and in the mean time Mrs. Marwood declar'd all to my
Lady.

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the
letter? ... My mother does not suspect my being in the
conspiracy? I fancy Marwood has not told her, tho'
she has told my husband.

Foib. Yes, Madam; but my Lady did not see that
part: We stilled the letter before she read so far. Has
that mischievous Devil told Mr. Fainall of your Ladiship
then?

Mrs. Fain. Ay, all's out, my affair with Mirabell,
every thing discover'd. This is the last day of our living
together, that's my comfort.

Foib. Indeed Madam, and so 'tis a comfort if you
knew all, ... he has been even with your Ladiship;
which I cou'd have told you long enough since, but
I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will:

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I had rather bring friends together, than set 'em at distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. Fain. Say'st thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, Madam, so Mrs. Mincing; we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our Chamber one evening, when you were at the Park;...and we were thought to have gone a walk. But we went up unawares,...tho' we were sworn to secrecy too; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it: But it was but a book of Psalms... So long as it was not a Bible oath, we may take it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I cou'd wish. Now Mincing?



S C E N E I I I.

[To them] Mincing.

Mincing.

MY Lady wou'd speak with Mrs. Foible, Mr. Mirabell is with her; he has set your Lady at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and wou'd have you hide yourself in my Ladys closet, 'till my old Ladys anger is cooled. O, my old Lady is in a perilous passion, at this thing Mr. Fainall has said. He swears, and my Lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane I vow. Says Mem, how that he'll have my Ladys fortune over to him, or he'll be divorc'd.

Mrs. Fain. Does your Lady or Mirabell know this?

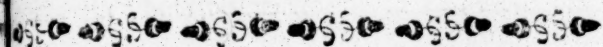
Minc. Yes Mem, they have sent me to see if

will be sober, and to bring him to them. My Lady
resolved to have him I think, rather than lose such a
sum as six thousand pound. O, come Mrs. Foible,
hear my old Lady.

Mrs. Fain. Foible, you must tell *Mincing*, that she
must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, Ma'am.

Minc. O yes *Mern*, I'll vouch any thing for your La-
dy's service, be what it will.



S C E N E I V.

Mrs. Fainall, Lady Wishfort, Marwood.

Lady.

O My dear Friend, how can I enumerate the benefits
that I have receiv'd from your goodness? To you I
owe the timely discovery of the false vows of *Mirabell*;
you I owe the detection of the impostor *Sir Rowland*.
and now you are become an intercessor with my Son-in-
law, to save the honour of my house, and compound
the frailties of my Daughter. Well Friend, you are
rough to reconcile me to the bad world; or else I would
go to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by
rivers and purling streams. Dear *Marwood*, let us leave
the world, and retire by our selves and be shepherdesses.

Mrs. Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, Ma-
am. We shall have leisure to think of retirement after-
wards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady. O Daughter, Daughter! is it possible thou
could'st be my child? Bone of my bone, and flesh of my
flesh, and as I may say, another me, and yet transgress
the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible
thou should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in
the direct mold of virtue? I have not only been a mold but

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a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

Mrs. Fain. I don't understand your Ladiship.

Lady. Not understand! Why have you not been taught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand? Here I am ruin'd to compound for your caprices and your customs. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my Neice, and all little enough...

Mrs. Fain. I am wrong'd and abus'd, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation; as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay or your friends friend, my false husband.

Mrs. Mar. My friend, *Mrs. Fainall*? Your husband my friend! what do you mean?

Mrs. Fain. I know what I mean, Madam, and so shall you; and so shall the world at a time convenient.

Mrs. Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, Madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your Ladiship in her family, should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, Madam, I will meddle no more with an affair, in which I am not personally concern'd.

Lady. O dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns;... You ought to ask pardon of your knees, ungrateful creature; she deserves more from you, than all your life can accomplish... O don't leave me destitute in this perplexity;... No, stick to me my good genius.

Mrs. Fain. I tell you, Madam, you're abus'd... to you? ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood... drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn your bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions. I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial.

S C E N E V.

Lady Wishfort, Marwood.

Lady.

WHY, if she should be innocent, if she should be wrong'd after all, ha? I don't know what to think... and I promise you, her education has been unexceptionable... I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young aversion and averfion to the very sight of Men, .. ay friend, she would ha' shriek'd if she had but seen a Man, 'till she was in her teens. As I'm a person 'tis true... She was never suffer'd to play with a Male-child, tho' but in hours; nay her very Babies were of the *feminine* gender,... O, she never look'd a Man in the face but her own Father, or the Chaplain; and him we made a shift to put upon her as a Woman, by the help of his long garments, and his sleek face; 'till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twas much she should be deceiv'd so long.
Lady. I warrant you, or she would never have born to have been catechiz'd by him, and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy Plays; and profane Musick-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeek nothing but rowdy, and the bafes roar blasphemy. O, she would have swoon'd at the sight or name of an obscene Play-book... And can I think after all this, that my Daughter can be naught? what, a Whore? And thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a Play-house. O dear friend, I can't believe it; no, no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, Madam? what, and have your name

name prostituted in a publick Court; yours and your Daughters reputation worry'd at the bar by a pack of bawling Lawyers? To be usher'd in with an O yes of scandal, and have your case open'd by an old fumbling leacher in a quoif, like a Man Midwife, to bring your Daughters infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters, and quiblers by the statute; and become a jest, against a rule of Court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record; not even in *Dooms-day-Book*: To discompose the gravity of the Bench, and provoke naughty interogatories in more naughty Law Latin; while the good Judge, tickl'd with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and figes off and on his cushion as if he had swallowed *Cantharides*, or sate upon *Cowitch*.

Lady. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. Mar. And then to have my young Revellers of the Temple take notes, like prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in Commons, or before drawn in an eating-house?

Lady. Worse and worse.

Mrs. Mar. Nay this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must after this be consign'd by the short-hand writers to the publick press; and from there be transferr'd to the hands, nay into the throats and lungs of Hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loudest flounder-mans: and this you must hear 'till you are stumm'd, nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

Lady. O, 'tis insupportable. No, no, dear Friend, make it up, make it up, ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up my self and my all, my Neice and her all—any thing, any thing for composition.

Mrs. Mar. Nay, Madam, I advise nothing, I only tell you before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall, who will be satisfy'd to huddle up all in silence, I shall be oblig'd to you. You must think I would rather congratulate than contradict with you.

Fainall

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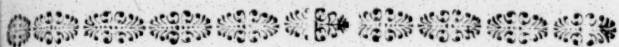
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Fain. I

SCENE winter



S C E N E V I.

Fainall, *Lady Wishfort, Mrs. Marwood.*

Lady.

A Y. ay, I do not doubt it, dear *Marwood*: No, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam, I have suffer'd my self to be overcome by the importunity of this Lady, your Friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life; on condition you oblige your self never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to marry?

Fain. No more Sir *Rowlands*,—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. Mar. That condition, I dare answer, my Lady will consent to, without difficulty; she has already but too much experienc'd the perfidiousness of Men. Besides, Madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

Lady. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency—

Fain. O, if you are prescrib'd marriage, you shall be consider'd; I will only reserve to my self the power to refuse for you. If your Physick be wholesome, it matters not who is your Apothecary. Next, my Wife shall settle the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

Lady. This is most inhumanly savage, exceeding the barbarity of a *Moscovite* Husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his *Czarish* Majesty's retinue, in winter evenings conference over brandy and pepper, amongst

amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practis'd in the Northern Hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endow'd, in right of my Wife, with that six thousand pound, with is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession; and which she has forfeited by will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased Husband, (Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting her self against your consent or knowledge, and by refusing the offer'd match with Sir Wilfull Whound, which you like a careful Aunt, had provided for her.

Lady. My Nephew was *non compos*; and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

Lady. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand 'till more sufficient deeds can be perfected: which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while I will go for the instrument, and 'till my return you may ballance this matter in your own discretion.



SCENE VII.

Lady Wishfort; Mrs. Marwood.

Lady.

THIS insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel: must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, Madam, that you should smart for your Daughters wantonness.

Lady. 'Twas against my consent that she married a Barbarian; but she would have him, tho' her year was out.—Ah! her first Husband, my Son *Languish*, was

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not have carry'd it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers; she is match'd now with a witness—I shall be mad, dear friend, is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—Here come two more of my *Egyptian* plagues too.

SCENE VIII.

[To them] Millamant, Sir Wilfull.

Sir Wilfull.

AUNT, your Servant.

Lady. Out *Caterpillar*, call not me Aunt; I know thee not.

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say,—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What wou'd you have? I hope I committed no offence, Aunt—and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a Man say fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you, I'm willing to marry my Cousin. So pray let's all be friends, she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

Lady. How's this, dear Neice? Have I any comfort in this be true?

Millamant. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, Madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinform'd, I have laid my commands on *Mirabell* to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this Flower of *Knighthood*:* And for the contract that pass'd between *Mirabell* and me, I have oblig'd him to make a resignation of it in your Ladyships presence;—He is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

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Lady. Well, I'll swear I am something reviv'd at this testimony of your obedience : but I cannot admit this traitor, — I fear I cannot fortify my self to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon ; I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, petrify incessantly.

Mill. If you disoblige him he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

Lady. Are you sure it will be the last time ? If I were sure of that — shall I never see him again ?

Mill. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together are you not ?

Sir Wil. 'Sheart the Gentleman's a civil Gentleman Aunt, let him come in ; why we are sworn Brothers and fellow travellers. — We are to be *Pylades* and *Orestes* he and I — he is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been overseas once already ; and with provision I marry my Cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company. — 'sheart, I'll call him in, — an I set on't once, he shall come in ; and see who hinders him.

[*Goes to the door and hails Christian.*

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady. O dear Marwood, you are not going ?

Mar. Not far, Madam ; I'll return immediately.



S C E N E I X.

Lady Wishfort, Millamant, Sir Wilfull, Mirabell.

Sir Wilfull.

LOOK up, Man, I'll stand by you, 'sbud an the frown, she can't kill you ; — Besides —

she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own; 'sheart, an she shou'd her forehead wou'd wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, Fellow-traveller.

Mira. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offer'd to so good a Lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy, — ah Madam, there is a time — but let it be forgotten — I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of standing at your feet; nay kill me not, by turning from me in disdain — I come not to plead for favour; — nay not for pardon; I am a Suppliant only for pity — I am going where I never shall behold you more...

Sir Wil. How, fellow-traveller!... You shall go by your self then.

Mira. Let me be pitied first; and afterwards forgotten... I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r Lady a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, Aunt, ... Come, come, forgive and forget Aunt; why you must an you are a Christian.

Mira. Consider Madam, in reality, you cou'd not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device; but I confess it had a face of guiltiness, — it was at most an artifice which Love contriv'd... And errors which Love produces have ever been accounted *venial*. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear; that to your cruel indignation, I have offer'd up this Beauty, and with my peace and quiet; nay all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, wou'd I may never be o' the *Quorum*, — An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again, — I wou'd I might never take shipping — Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth-glew, and

that's hardly dry; — One doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller and 'tis dissolv'd.

Lady. Well Nephew, upon your account — Ah, he has a false insinuating tongue — Well Sir, I will strike my just resentment at my Nephews request. — I will endeavour what I can to forget, — but on proviso that you resign the Contract with my Neice immediately.

Mira. It is in writing, and with papers of consequence but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

Lady. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue; — When I did not see him I cou'd have brib'd a Villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smother'd in my breast. —



S C E N E X.

[*To them*] Fainall, *Mrs.* Marwood.

Fainall.

YOUR date of deliberation, Madam, is expired. Here is the instrument, are you prepar'd to sign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My Neice exerts a lawful claim, having match'd her self to my direction to Sir *Will*.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me — 'tis impos'd on you, Madam.

Milla. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mira. And, Sir, I have resign'd my pretensions.

Sir Will. And, Sir, I assert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, Sir, and of your instrument. Should you talk of an instrument Sir, I have a fox by my thigh shall hack your instrument of

Pollex to shreds, Sir. It shall not be sufficient for a *Micromus* or a Tailors measure; therefore withdraw your instrument Sir, or by'r Lady I shall draw mine.

Lady. Hold, Nephew, hold.

Milla. Good Sir *Wilfull* respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed? Are you provided of your guard, with your tingle beef-eater there? But I'm prepared for you; and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my Wifes to my sole use; as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant. — I suppose, Madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. *Mirabell*, your resignation; nor, Sir *Wilfull*, your right — you may draw your fox if you please Sir, and make a Bear-Garden flourish somewhere else. For here it will not avail. This, my Lady *Wishfort*, must be subscrib'd, or your darling daughter's turn'd a-drift, like a leaky hulk to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

Lady. Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! dost thou not owe thy being, my subsistence to my Daughters fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mira. But that you wou'd not accept of a remedy from my hands — I own I have not deserv'd you shou'd owe any obligation to me; or else perhaps I cou'd advise, —

Lady. O what? what? to save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay I'll consent to any thing to come, to be deliver'd from this tyranny.

Mira. Ay Madam; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have dispos'd of her, who only shou'd have made me a compensation for all my services; — but be it as it may, I am resolv'd I'll serve you; you shall not be wrong'd in this savage manner.

Lady. How? Dear Mr. *Mirabell*, can you be so generous

nerous at last ! But it is not possible. Harkee, I'll break my Nephews match, you shall have my Neice yet, and all her fortune ; if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mira. Will you ; I take you at your word: I am no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira. Foible is one, and a penitent.



S C E N E X I.

[*To them*] *Mrs. Fainall, Foible, Mincing.*

Mira and Lady go to Mrs. Fain. and Foible.

Mrs. Marwood.

O My shame ! these corrupt things are brought in to expose me.

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but the *Way of the World*. That shall not make me to relinquish or abate one title of my terms, and I will insist the more.

Foib. Yes indeed Madam, I'll take my bible-oath *Minc.* And so will I *Mem.*

Lady. O *Marwood, Marwood*, art thou false ! friend deceive me ! hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man ?

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit against your friend, to the assertions of two such mercenary truls ?

Minc. Mercenary, *Mem* ? I scorn your words. true we found you and *Mr. Fainall* in the blue gown sleep.

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the same token, you swore us to secresie upon
Poems. Mercenary! No, if we wou'd have
mercenary, we shou'd have held our tongues; you
wou'd have brib'd us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing. — Well,
are you the better for this? Is this Mr. *Mirabells* ex-
periment? I'll be put off no longer — You, thing, that
as a Wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee
merewithal to hide thy shame: your body shall be na-
med as your reputation.

Mrs. Fain. I despise you, and desie your malice —
I have aspers'd me wrongfully — I have prov'd your
treachery — go you and your treacherous. — I will not
see it, but starve together — perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed my
Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah Mr. *Mirabell*, this is small comfort, the
rejection of this affair.

Mira. O in good time — your leave for the other
tender and penitent to appear, Madam.

SCENE XII.

[To them] Waitwell with a box of
writings.

Lady.

Sir Rowland — well, rascal.

Wait. What your Ladiship pleases. — I have
brought the black-box at last, Madam.

Mira. Give it me. Madam, you remembet your
promise.

Lady. Ay, dear Sir.

Mira. Where are the Gentlemen?

Wait. At hand Sir, rubbing their eyes, — just risen
from sleep.

Fain.

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Fain. S'death what's this to me? I'll not wait for private concerns.



SCENE XIII.

[To them] *Petulant, Witwoud.*

Petulant.

HOW now? what's the matter? whose hand's it? *Wit.* Hey day! what are you all got together like Players at the end of the last act?

Mira. You may remember, Gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay I do, my hand I remember — *Petulant* mark.

Mira. You wrong him, his name is fairly written as shall appear — you do not remember, Gentlemen any thing of what that Parchment contain'd —

Undoing the

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know — *Mark* your promise.

Lady. Ay, ay, Sir, upon my honour.

Mira. Mr. *Fainall*, it is now time that you know, that your Lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune —

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, Sir. I say that this Lady while a widow having it seems receiv'd some cautions respecting the incontinency and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected — she did, I say, by the whole

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vice of Friends and of sages learn'd in the laws of
this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me
in trust, and to the uses within mention'd. You may
read if you please — [*Holding out the parchment.*]
perhaps what is written on the back may serve
our occasions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir. What's here ! Damnation ?
[*Reads.*] *A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real
of Arabella Languish, Widow, in trust to Ed-
ward Mirabell.*

Confusion !

Mira. Even so, Sir, 'tis the Way of the World,
of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed
may bear an elder date than what you have obtain'd
from your Lady.

Fain. Perfidious Fiend ! then thus I'll be reveng'd.

[*Offers to run at Mrs. Fain.*

Sir Wil. Hold, Sir, now you may make your Bear-
garden flourish somewhere else, Sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, Sir, be sure
you shall. — Let me pass, oaf.

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resent-
ment. You had better give it vent.

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent — and to your
confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt.

SCENE the last.

Lady Wishfort, Millamant, Mirabell,
Mrs. Fainall, Sir Wilfull, Petulant,
Witwoud, Foible, Mincing, Waitwell.

Lady.

O Daughter, Daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inheri-
ted thy Mothers prudence.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend to whose advice all is owing.

Lady. Well Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise — and I must perform mine. — First I pardon your sake Sir Rowland there and Foible — the next thing is to break the matter to my Nephew — and how do that —

Mira. For that, Madam, give yourself no trouble — let me have your consent — Sir Wilfull is my friend — he has had compassion upon Lovers, and generously gag'd a volunteer in this action, for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir Will. 'Sheart, Aunt, I have no mind to marry. My Cousin's a fine Lady, and the Gentleman loves her and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts — I have set out, and when I'm set on't, I must do't. And if those two Gentlemen wou'd travel too, I think they will be spar'd.

Pet. For my part, I say little — I think things will best off or on.

Wit. I gad I understand nothing of the matter; I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

Lady. Well Sir, take her, and with her all that I can give you.

Milla. Why does not the man take me? Would he have me give my self to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again;

[Kisses her]

I wou'd have you as often as possibly I can. Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fault.

Sir Will. 'Sheart you'll have time enough to consider you're marry'd; or if you will toy now, you may have a dance in the mean time; that we who are Lovers may have some other employment, besides being on.

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull, shall we do for musick?

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Foib. O Sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowlands entertainment are yet within call.

[*A Dance.*

Lady. As I am a person I can hold out no longer; —I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my Son *Fainall* will pursue some desperate course.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not your self on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part I will contribute all that in me lyes to a reunion: in the mean time, Madam, [*To Mrs. Fain.*] let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well manag'd, to make you live easily together.

*From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed;
Lest mutual falsehood stain the Bridal-Bed,
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.*

[*Exeunt Onines.*





EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle.

After our Epilogue this crowd dismisses,
I'm thinking how this Play'll be pull'd to pieces.
But pray consider, e're you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 't wou'd be to please you all.
There are some Critics so with spleen diseas'd,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleas'd:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases any one against his will.
Then, all bad Poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number's swell'd the Town well knows.
In shoals, I've mark'd 'em judging in the Pit;
Tho' they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
But that they have been damn'd for want of wit.
Since when, they by their own offences taught,
Set up for Spies on Plays, and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent:
Such, who watch Plays, with scurrilous intent
To mark out who by characters are meant.
And tho' no perfect likeness they can trace;
Yet each pretends to know the copy'd face.
These, with false glosses feed their own ill nature,
And turn to Label, what was meant a Satire.
May such malicious Fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the Fools design'd:
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a Scene,
And furnish Fool enough to entertain.

EPILOGUE.

For well the learn'd and the judicious know,
That Satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
As any one abstracted Fop to show.
For, as when Painters form a matchless face,
They from each Fair one catch some diff'rent grace;
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single Beauty must pretend:
So Poets oft, do in one piece expose
Whole belles assemblées of Cocquets and Beaux.





T O
M^R CONGREVE,
Occasion'd by his
C O M E D Y
C A L L' D
The Way of the W O R L D.

WHEN pleasure's falling to the low delight,
In the vain joys of the uncertain sight,
No sense of Wit when rude spectators know,
But in distorted gesture, farce and show;
How could, great Author, your aspiring mind
Dare to write only to the few refin'd?
Yet tho' that nice ambition you pursue,
'Tis not in Congreve's power to please but few.
Implicitly devoted to his Fame,
Well dress'd Barbarians know his awful name;
Tho' senseless they're of mirth, but when they laugh
As they feel wine, but when, 'till drunk they quaff

On you, from Fate, a lavish portion fell
In ev'ry way of writing to excell.
Your Muse applause to Arabella brings,
In notes as sweet as Arabella sings.

TO MR. CONGREGUE.

When e'er you draw an undissembled woe,
With sweet distress your rural numbers flow;
And tell the complaint of ev'ry Swain,
And still the eccho of the plain!
If your Muse describe, with warming force,
The wounded Frenchman falling from his horse;
Or her own William glorious in the strife,
Flowing on the prostrate foe his life:
In the great act as gen'rously rehearse,
And all the English fury's in your verse.
Your selected Scenes, and handsome choice,
In nobled Comedy exalts her voice:
To check unjust esteem and fond desire,
And teach to scorn, what else we should admire.
The just impression taught by you, we bear,
The Player acts the World, the World the Player;
Whom still that world, unjustly disesteems,
And he alone, professes what he seems.
But when your Muse assumes her tragick part,
She conquers and she reigns in ev'ry heart;
To mourn with her Men cheat their private woe,
And gen'rous pity's all the grief they know.
The Widow, who impatient of delay,
From the town-joys must mask it to the Play,
Lays with your Mourning-Brides resistless moan,
And weeps a loss she slighted, when her own.
You give us torment, and you give us ease,
And vary our afflictions as you please.
Not a heart so kind as yours in pain,
To load your Friends with cares you only feign;
Your Friends in grief, compos'd your self, to leave?
That 'tis the only way you'll e'er deceive.
Even still, great Sir, your moving pow'r employ,
To hush our sorrow, and correct our joy.

R. STEELE.

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